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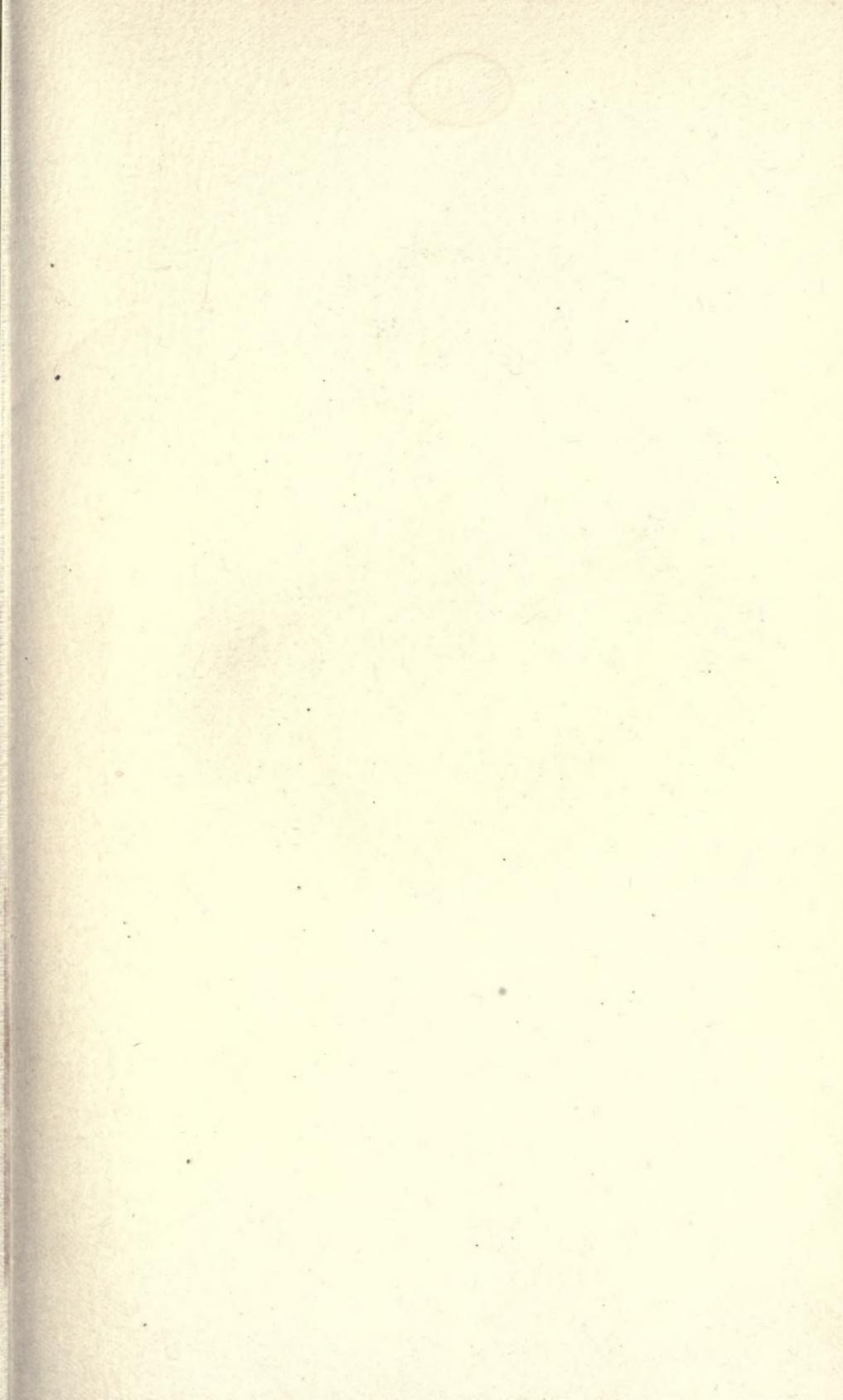
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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

A LITERARY LIFE.





MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A LITERARY LIFE; AND SELECTIONS FROM MY FAVOURITE POETS AND PROSE WRITERS.

BY
MARY RUSSELL MITFORD,

AUTHOR OF "OUR VILLAGE," "BELFORD REGIS," ETC.



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TO

HENRY F. CHORLEY, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

BUT for you this book would never have existed. It has been to me throughout a source of great gratification. As I wrote line after line of our fine old Poets, many a cherished scene and many a happy hour seemed to live again in my memory and my heart. But no higher pleasure can it afford me, than the opportunity of expressing to you my sincere respect and admiration for talent, especially dramatic talent not even yet sufficiently known, and for innumerable personal qualities worth all the talent in the world.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

SWALLOWFIELD, NEAR READING,
DECEMBER, 1851.

P R E F A C E.

THE title of this Book gives a very imperfect idea of the contents. Perhaps it would be difficult to find a short phrase that would accurately describe a work so desultory and so wayward—a work where there is far too much of personal gossip and of local scene-painting for the grave pretension of critical essays, and far too much of criticism and extract for anything approaching in the slightest degree to autobiography.

The courteous reader must take it for what it is—an attempt to make others relish a few favourite writers as heartily as I have relished them myself. My opinions, such as they are, have at least the merit of being honest, earnest, and individual, unbiassed by the spirit of coterie or the influence of fashion. Many of my extracts will be found to comprise the best bits of neglected authors ; and some, I think, as the noble murder speech of Daniel Webster, the poems of Thomas Davis, of Mrs. James Gray, of Mr. Darley, of Mr. Noel, and of Dr. Holmes, will be new to the English public. Some, again, as the delightful pleasantries of Praed, and Frere, and Catherine

Fanshawe, are difficult, if not impossible, to procure ; and others possess in perfection the sort of novelty which belongs to the forgotten. Amongst these I may class “ Holcroft’s Memoirs,” “ Richardson’s Correspondence,” the curious “ Trial of Captain Goodere,” and the “ Pleader’s Guide.” I even fear that the choicest morsels of my book, the delicious specimens of Cowley’s prose, may come under the same category. Ah ! I wish I were as sure of my original matter as I am of my selections.

It is right to say that a few of these papers (like the first volume of my earliest prose work, “ Our Village” have appeared in an obscure Journal.

SWALLOWFIELD, NEAR READING,
DECEMBER, 1851.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A LITERARY LIFE

I.

VARIOUS AUTHORS.

MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS.

PERCY'S RELIQUES.

I NEVER take up these three heavily-bound volumes, the actual first edition, at which Dr. Johnson was wont to scoff, without feeling a pleasure quite apart from that excited by the charming book itself; although to that book, far more than to any modern school of minstrelsy, we owe the revival of the taste for romantic and lyrical poetry, which had lain dormant since the days of the Commonwealth.

This pleasure springs from a very simple cause—the association of these ballads with the happiest days of my happy childhood.

In common with many only children, especially where the mother is of a grave and home-loving nature, I learned to read at a very early age. Before I was three years old my father would perch me on the breakfast-table to exhibit my one accomplishment to some admiring guest, who admired all the more, because, a small puny child, looking far younger than I really was, nicely dressed, as only children generally are, and gifted with an affluence of curls, I might have passed for the twin sister of my own great doll. On the table was I perched to read some Foxite newspaper, "Courier," or "Morning Chronicle," the Whiggish oracles of the day, and as my delight in the high-seasoned politics of sixty years ago was naturally less than that of my hearers, this display of precocious acquirement was commonly rewarded, not by cakes or sugar-plums, too plentiful in my case to be very greatly cared for, but by a sort of payment in kind. I read leading articles to please the company; and my dear mother recited the

“Children in the Wood” to please me. This was my reward : and I looked for my favourite ballad after every performance, just as the piping bullfinch that hung in the window looked for his lump of sugar after going through “God save the King.” The two cases were exactly parallel.

One day it happened that I was called upon to exhibit, during some temporary absence of the dear mamma, and cried out amain for the ditty that I loved. My father, who spoiled me, did not know a word of it, but he hunted over all the shelves till he had found the volumes, that he might read it to me himself ; and then I grew unreasonable in my demand, and coaxed, and kissed, and begged that the book might be given to my maid Nancy, that she might read it to me whenever I chose. And (have I not said that my father spoilt me ?) I carried my point, and the three volumes were actually put in charge of my pretty neat maid, Nancy (in those days nursery-governesses were not), and she, waxing weary of the “Children in the Wood,” gradually took to reading to me some of the other ballads ; and as from three years old I grew to four or five, I learned to read them myself, and the book became the delight of my childhood, as it is now the solace of my age. Ah, well-a-day ! sixty years have passed, and I am an old woman, whose nut-brown hair has turned to white ; but I never see that heavily-bound copy of “Percy’s Reliques” without the home of my infancy springing up before my eyes.

A pleasant home, in truth, it was. A large house in a little town of the north of Hampshire,—a town, so small that but for an ancient market, very slenderly attended, nobody would have dreamt of calling it anything but a village. The breakfast-room, where I first possessed myself of my beloved ballads, was a lofty and spacious apartment, literally lined with books, which, with its Turkey carpet, its glowing fire, its sofas and its easy chairs, seemed, what indeed it was, a very nest of English comfort. The windows opened on a large old-fashioned garden, full of old-fashioned flowers, stocks, roses, honeysuckles, and pinks ; and that again led into a grassy orchard, abounding with fruit-trees, a picturesque country church with its yews and lindens on one side, and beyond, a down as smooth as velvet, dotted with rich islands of coppice, hazel, woodbine, hawthorn, and holly reaching up into the young oaks, and overhanging flowery patches of primroses,

wood-sorrel, wild hyacinths, and wild strawberries. On the side opposite the church, in a hollow fringed with alders and bulrushes, gleamed the bright clear lakelet, radiant with swans and water-lilies, which the simple townsfolk were content to call the Great Pond.

What a playground was that orchard! and what playfellows were mine! Nancy, with her trim prettiness, my own dear father, handsomest and cheerfulest of men, and the great Newfoundland dog Coe, who used to lie down at my feet, as if to invite me to mount him, and then to prance off with his burthen, as if he enjoyed the fun as much as we did. Happy, happy days! It is good to have the memory of such a childhood! to be able to call up past delights by the mere sight and sound of Chevy Chase or the Battle of Otterbourne.

And as time wore on the fine ballad of "King Estmere," according to Bishop Percy, one of the most ancient in the collection, got to be amongst our prime favourites. Absorbed by the magic of the story, the old English never troubled us. I hope it will not trouble my readers. We, a little child, and a young country maiden, the daughter of a respectable Hampshire farmer, were no bad representatives in point of cultivation of the noble dames and their attendant damsels who had so often listened with delight to wandering minstrels in bower and hall. In one point, we had probably the advantage of them; we could read, and it is most likely that they could not. For the rest, every age has its own amusements; and these metrical romances, whether said or sung, may be regarded as equivalent in their day to the novels and operas of ours.

KYNG ESTMERE.

Hearken to me, gentlemen,
Come, and you shall heare;
I'll tell you of two of the boldest brethren
That ever born y-were.

The tone of them was Adler yonge,
The tother was King Estmere;
They were as bolde men in their deedes,
As any were far and neare.

As they were drinking ale and wine,
Within Kyng Estmere's halle;
"When will ye marry a wyfe, brothér
A wyfe to gladd us alle?"

Then bespake him, Kyng Estmere,

And answered him hastilee :

“I knowe not that ladye in any lande.

That is able to marry with me.”

“King Adland hath a daughter, brother,

Men call her bright and sheene ;

If I were kyng here in your stead,

That ladye sholde be queen.”

Sayes, “ Reade me, reade me, deare brother,

Throughout merry England ;

Where we might find a messenger,

Betweene us two to send ?”

Sayes, “ Yov shal ryde yourself, brother,

I'll bear you compانée ;

Many through false messengers are deceived

And I feare lest soe sholde we.”

Thus they renisht them to ryde,

Of twoe good renisht steedes,

And when they come to Kyng Adland's halle,

Of red golde shone their weedes.

And when they come to Kynge Adland's halle,

Before the goodlye yate

There they found good Kyng Adland,

Rearing himself thereatt.

“ Now Christe thee save, good Kyng Adland,

Nowe Christe thee save and see !”

Said “ You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,

Right heartily unto me.”

“ You have a daughter,” said Adler yonge,

“ Men call her bright and sheene,

My brother wold marry her to his wyfe,

Of England to be queene.”

“ Yesterday was at my deare daughter,

Syr Bremon the Kyng of Spayne :

And then she nicked him of naye,

I feare shelle do you the same.”

“ The Kyng of Spayne is a foule paynim,

And lieveth on Mahound ;

And pitye it were that fayre ladye

Shold marry a heathen hound.”

“ But grant to me,” says Kyng Estmere,

“ For my love I you praye,

That I may see your daughter deare,

Before I goe hence awaye.”

“ Although itt is seven yeare and more

Syth my daughter was in halie,

She shall come downe once for your sake,

To glad my guestés all.”

Down then came that mayden fayre,
 With ladyes laced in pall,
 And half a hundred of bolde knightes,
 To bring her from bowre to halle ;
 And eke as many gentle squieres,
 To waite upon them all.

[Scott has almost literally copied the four last lines of this stanza in the first canto of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." One of the many obligations that we owe to these old unknown poets, is the inspiration that Sir Walter drew from them, an inspiration to be traced almost as frequently in his prose as in his verse.]

The talents of golde were on her head sette,
 Hung lowe down to her knee ;
 And every rynge on her smalle finger
 Shone of the chrysstell free.

Sayes, "Christ you save, my deare madame ;"
 Sayes, "Christ you save and see !"
 Sayes, "You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,
 Right welcome unto me.

"And iff you love me as you saye,
 So well and heartilée ;
 All that ever you are comen about,
 Soone sped now itt may bee."

Then bespake her father deare :
 "My daughter, I saye naye ;
 Remember well the Kyng of Spayn,
 What he sayd yesterdaye.

"He wolde pull down my halles and castles,
 And reeve me of my lyfe ;
 And ever I feare that paynim kyng,
 If I reeve him of his wyfe."

"Your castles and your towres, father,
 Are stronglye built aboute ;
 And therefore of that foul paynim,
 Wee neede not stande in doubte.

"Plyghte me your troth nowe, Kyng Estmere.
 By Heaven and your righte hande,
 That you will marrye me to your wyfe,
 And make me queen of your lande."

Then Kyng Estmere. he plight his troth,
 By Heaven and his right hand,
 That he would marrye her to his wyfe,
 And make her queen of his lande.

And he tooke leave of that ladye fayre,
 To go to his own contree;
 To fetch him dukes, and lordes, and knyghtes,
 That marryed they might be.

They had not ridden scant a myle,
 A myle forthe of the towne,
 But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
 With kempes many a one.

But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
 With many a grimm bardone,
 Tone day to marrye Kyng Adland's daughter,
 Tother day to carrie her home.

Then she sent after Kyng Estmere
 In all the speede might bee,
 That he must either returne and fighte,
 Or goe home and lose his ladye.

One whyle then the page he went,
 Another whyle he ranne;
 Till he had o'retaken Kyng Estmere,
 I wis he never blanne.

“ Tydinges ! tydinges ! King Estmere ! ”
 “ What tydinges nowe, my boye ? ”
 “ Oh, tydinges I can tell to you,
 That will you sore annoye.

“ You had not ridden scant a myle,
 A myle out of the towne,
 But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
 With kempes many a one.

“ But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
 With many a bold bardone,
 Tone day to marrye Kyng Adland's daughter,
 Tother day to carry her home.

“ That ladye faire she greetes you well,
 And evermore well, by me :
 You must either turne again and fighte,
 Or goe home and lose your ladye.”

Sayes, “ Reade me, reade me, deare brother,
 My reade shall ryde at thee,
 Which waye we best may turne and fighte,
 To save this fayre ladye ? ”

“ Now hearken to me,” sayes Adler yonge,
 And your reade must rise at me,
 I quicklye will devise a waye,
 To sette thy ladye free.

“ My mother was a western woman,
 And learned in gramarye,
 And when I learned at the schole,
 Something she taught itt me.

“ There groweth an hearbe within this fielde,
 And iff it were but known,
 His color which is whyte and redde,
 It will make blacke and browne.

“ His color which is browne and blacke,
 It will make redde and whyte ;
 That sworde is not all Englânde,
 Upon his coate will byte.

“ And you shall be a harper, brother,
 Out of the north countrée ;
 And I'll be your boye so faine of fighte,
 To beare your harpe by your knee.

“ And you shall be the best harper,
 That ever took harp in hand,
 And I will be the best singer,
 That ever songe in the land.

“ It shal be written in our forheads
 All and in gramaryé,
 That we twoe are the boldest men,
 That are in all Christentye.”

And thus they renisht them to ryde,
 On twoe good renisht steedes,
 And when they came to Kyng Adland's halle,
 Of redd gold shone their weedes.

And when they came to Kyng Adland's halle,
 Until the fayre hall yate,
 There they found a proud portér
 Rearing himselfe thereatt.

Sayes, “ Christ thee save, thou proud portér,”
 Sayes, “ Christ thee save and see.”
 “ Now you be welcome,” sayd the portér,
 “ Of what land soever ye be.”

“ We been harpers,” sayd Adler yonge,
 “ Come out of the north countrée ;
 We been come hither until this place,
 This proud wedding for to see.”

Sayd, “ An your color were whyte and redde,
 As it is blacke and browne,
 I'd say Kyng Estmere and his brother,
 Were comen until this towne.”

Then they pulled out a ryng of gold,
 Layd it on the porter's arme,
 “ And ever we will thee, proud portér,
 Thou wilt say us no harme.”

Sore he looked on Kyng Estmere,
 And sore he handled the ryng,
 Then opened to them the fayre hall yates,
 He lett for no kind of thyng.

Kyng Estmere he light off his steede,
 Up at the fayre hall board ;
 The frothe that came from his bridle bitte,
 Light on Kyng Bremor's beard.

Sayes, "Stable thy steede, thou proud harpér,
 Go stable him in the stalle ;
 It doth not become a proud harpér,
 To stable him in a kyng's halle."

"My ladde he is so lither," he sayd,
 "He will do nought that's meeete,
 And aye that I could but find the man,
 Were able him to beate."

"Thou speakest proud wordes," sayd the paynim kyng,
 "Thou harper, here to me ;
 There is a man within this halle,
 That will beate thy ladd and thee."

"O lett that man come down," he sayd,
 "A sight of him wolde I see,
 And when he hath beaten well my ladd,
 Then he shall beate of mee."

Down then came the kemperrye man,
 And looked him in the eare,
 For all the golde that was under heaven,
 He durst not neigh him neare.

"And how nowe, kempe," sayd the Kyng of Spayn,
 "And now what aileth thee?"
 He sayes, "It is writen in his forehead,
 All, and in gramaryé,
 That for alle the golde that is under heaven,
 I dare not neigh him nye."

Kyng Estmere then pulled forth his harpe,
 And played thereon so sweete,
 Upstarte the ladye from the kyng,
 As he sate att the meate.

"Now staye thy harpe, thou proud harpér,
 Now staye thy harpe I saye ;
 For an thou playest as thou beginnest,
 Thou'l till my bride awaye."

He struck upon his harpe agayne,
 And playde both fair and free ;
 The ladye was so pleased thereatt,
 She laughed loud laughters three.

"Now sell me thy harpe," said the Kyng of Spayn,
 "Thy harpe and stryngs eche one,
 And as many gold nobles thou shalt have
 As there be stryngs thereon."

“ And what wolde ye doe with my harpe ? ” he sayd,

“ If I did sell it yee ? ”—
“ To playe my wyfe and I a fitt,
When we together be.”

“ Nowe sell me, Sir Kyng, thy bryde soe gay,
As she sits laced in pall,
And as many gold nobles I will give,
As there be ryngs in the hall.”

“ And what wolde ye doe with my bryde soe gay
Iff I did sell her yee ? ”—

“ More seemly it is for that fair ladye
To wed with me than thee.”

He played agayne both loud and shrille,
And Adler he did syng ;
“ O ladye, this is thy owne true love,
No harper, but a kyng.

“ O ladye, this is thy owne true love,
As playnlye thou mayst see ;
And I'll rid thee of that foul paynim,
Who parts thy love and thee.”

The ladye lookt and the lady blusht,
And blusht and lookt agayne,
While Adler he hath drawn his brande,
And hath Sir Bremor slayne.

Up then rose the kemperye men,
And loud they gan to crye :
“ Ah, traytors ! yee have slayne our kyng,
And therefore ye shall dye.”

Kyng Estmere threwe the harpe asyde,
And swith he drew his brand ;
And Estmere he, and Adler yonge,
Right stiff in stour can stand.

And aye their swordes soe sore can byte,
Through help of gramarye,
That soon they have slayne the kemperye men,
Or forst them forth to flee.

King Estmere took that fayre ladye,
And married her to his wyfe,
And brought her home to merry England.
With her to leade his lyfe.

I must not, however, attempt to quote more of those fine old ballads here : the feuds of the Percy and the Douglas would take up too much space ; so would the Loves of King Arthur's Court, and the Adventures of Robin Hood. Even the story of the Heir of Lynne must remain untold ; and I must content myself with two of the shortest and least hack-

neyed poems in a book that for great and varied interest can hardly be surpassed. "The Lie," is said to have been written by Sir Walter Raleigh the night before his execution. That it was written at that exact time is pretty well disproved by the date of its publication in "Davidson's Poems," before Sir Walter's death; it is even uncertain that Raleigh was the author; but that it is of that age is beyond all doubt; so is its extraordinary beauty—a beauty quite free from the conceits which deform too many of our finest old lyrics.

Go, Soul, the body's guest,
Upon a thankless errand;
Fear not to touch the best,
The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Go tell the Court it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Go tell the Church it shows
Men's good, and doth no good:
If Church and Court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates they live
Acting by others' actions,
Not loved unless they give,
Not strong but by their factions:
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition
That rule affairs of state,
Their purpose is ambition,
Their practice only hate:
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
They beg for more by spending,
Who in their greatest cost
Seek nothing but commanding:
And if they make reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

Tell zeal it lacks devotion;
Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
Tell flesh it is but dust;
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth ;
 Tell honour how it alters ;
 Tell beauty how she blasteth ;
 Tell favour how she falters ;
 And as they shall reply,
 Give each of them the lie.

 Tell wit how much it wrangles
 In fickle points of niceness ;
 Tell wisdom she entangles
 Herself in over-wiseness :
 And if they do reply,
 Straight give them both the lie.

 Tell physic of her boldness ;
 Tell skill it is pretension ;
 Tell charity of coldness ;
 Tell law it is contention :
 And as they yield reply,
 So give them still the lie.

 Tell fortune of her blindness ;
 Tell nature of decay ;
 Tell friendship of unkindness ;
 Tell justice of delay :
 And if they dare reply,
 Then give them all the lie.

 Tell arts they have no soundness,
 But vary by esteeming ;
 Tell schools they want profoundness,
 And stand too much on seeming ;
 If arts and schools reply,
 Give arts and schools the lie.

 Tell faith it's fled the city ;
 Tell how the country erreth ;
 Tell, manhood shakes off pity ;
 Tell, virtue least preferreth :
 And if they do reply,
 Spare not to give the lie.

 So when thou hast, as I
 Commandeth thee, done blabbing,
 Although to give the lie
 Deserves no less than stabbing,
 Yet stab at thee who will,
 No stab the soul can kill.

WINIFREDA.

About the authorship of this beautiful address to conjugal love, there is also much uncertainty. Bishop Percy calls it a "Translation from the Antient British," probably to veil the

real writer. We find it included among Gilbert Cooper's poems, a diamond amongst pebbles ; he never could have written it. It has been claimed for Steevens, who did the world good service as one of the earliest restorers of Shakespeare's text ; but who is almost as famous for his bitter and cynical temper as for his acuteness as a verbal critic. Could this charming love-song, true in its tenderness as the gushing notes of a bird to his sitting mate, have been poured forth by a man whom the whole world agreed in hating ? After all, we have no need to meddle with this vexed question. Let us be content to accept thankfully one of the very few purely English ballads which contradict the reproach of our Scottish and Irish neighbours, when they tell us that our love-songs are of the head not of the heart. This poem, at least, may vie with those of Gerald Griffin in the high and rare merit of conveying the noblest sentiments in the simplest language.

Away ! let nought to love displeasing,
My Winifreda, move your care ;
Let nought delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy fear.

What though no grant of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood ?
We'll shine in more substantial honours,
And to be noble we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
Shall sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke ;
And all the great ones, they shall wonder
How they respect such little folk.

What though from fortune's lavish bounty
No mighty treasures we possess ?
We'll find within our pittance plenty,
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give ;
For we will live a life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth to age in love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread ;
Sweet-smiling Peace shall crown our dwelling,
And babes, sweet-smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
While round my knees they fondly clung ;
To see them look their mother's features,
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue.

And when with envy, time transported,
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Surely this is the sort of poetry that ought to be popular—to be sung in our concert-rooms, and set to such airs as should be played on barrel-organs through our streets, suggesting the words and the sentiments as soon as the first notes of the melody make themselves heard under the window.

II.

IRISH AUTHORS.

THOMAS DAVIS—JOHN BANIM.

CONSIDERING his immense reputation in the Sister Island, the name of Thomas Davis has hardly found its due place in our literature. He was an Irish barrister; the most earnest, the most vehement, the most gifted, and the most beloved of the Young Ireland party. Until the spring of 1840, when he was in his twenty-sixth year, he had only been remarkable for extreme good nature, untiring industry, and very varied learning. At that period he blazed forth at once as a powerful and brilliant political writer, produced an eloquent and admirable "Life of Curran," became one of the founders of the "Nation" newspaper, and carried his zeal in the cause of nationality to such excess, that he actually proposed to publish a weekly journal in the Irish tongue—an impracticable scheme, which happily ended in talk.

To the newspaper which was established, and which the young patriots condescended to write in the language—to use their own phrase—of the Saxons, we owe the beautiful lyrics of Thomas Davis. The editor of the "Nation" had faith in the well-known saying of Fletcher of Saltoun, "Give me the writing of the ballads, and let who will make the laws;" and in default of other aid, the regular contributors to the new journal resolved to attempt the task themselves. It is difficult to believe, but the editor of his poems dwells upon it as a well-known fact, that up to this time the author of "The Sack of Baltimore" had never written a line of verse in his life, and

was, indeed, far less sanguine than his coadjutors in the success of the experiment. How completely *he* succeeded there is no need to tell, although nearly all that he has written was the work of one hurried year, thrown off in the midst of a thousand occupations and a thousand claims. A very few years more, and his brief and bright career was cut short by a sudden illness, which carried him rapidly to the grave, beloved and lamented by his countrymen of every sect and of every party :

" His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes :
 * * * * * He had kept
 The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept."

Oh ! that he had lived to love Ireland, not better, but more wisely, and to write volumes upon volumes of such lyrics as the two first which I transcribe, such biographies as his "Life of Curran," and such criticism as his "Essay upon Irish Song !"

I will deal more tenderly than he would have done with printer and reader, by giving them as little as I can of his beloved Cymric words (such is the young Irish name for the old Irish language) ; and by sparing them altogether his beloved Cymric character, which I have before my eyes at this moment, looking exactly like a cross between Arabic and Chinese.

THE SACK OF BALTIMORE.

Baltimore is a small seaport, in the barony of Carbery, in South Munster. It grew up round a castle of O'Driscoll's, and was, after his ruin, colonized by the English. On the 20th of June, 1631, the crew of two Algerine galleys landed in the dead of the night, sacked the town, and bore off into slavery all who were not too old or too young, or too fierce, for their purpose. The pirates were steered up the intricate channel by one Hackett, a Dungarvon fisherman, whom they had taken at sea for that office. Two years after he was convicted and executed for the crime.

The summer sun is falling soft on Carbery's hundred isles ;
 The summer sun is gleaming still through Gabriel's rough defiles ;
 Old Inisherkin's crumbled fane looks like a moulting bird ;
 And in a calm and sleepy swell the ocean-tide is heard ;
 The hookers lie upon the beach ; the children cease their play ;
 The gossips leave the little inn ; the households kneel to pray ;
 And full of love and peace and rest, its daily labour o'er.
 Upon that cosy creek there lay the town of Baltimore.

A deeper rest, a starry trance, has come with midnight there,
 No sound, except that throbbing wave, in earth or sea or air ;
 The massive capes and ruined towers seem conscious of the calm ;
 The fibrous sod and stunted trees are breathing heavy balm,
 So still the night, those two long barques round Dunashad that glide,
 Must trust their oars, methinks not few, against the ebbing tide ;
 Oh ! some sweet mission of true love must urge them to the shore,
 They bring some lover to his bride, who sighs in Baltimore.

All, all asleep within each roof along that rocky street,
 And these must be the lover's friends, with gently gliding feet ;—
 A stifled gasp ! a dreamy noise !—“ The roof is in a flame ! ”
 From out their beds and to their doors rush maid and sire and dame,
 And meet upon the threshold-stone, the gleaming sabre's fall,
 And o'er each black and bearded face the white or crimson shawl ;
 The yell of “ Allah ! ” breaks above the prayer and shriek and roar—
 Oh, blessed God ! the Algerine is lord of Baltimore !

Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword ;
 Then sprang the mother on the brand with which her son was gored ;
 Then sank the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching wild ;
 Then fled the maiden, moaning faint, and nestled with the child.
 But see yon pirate strangled lies and crushed with splashing heel,
 While o'er him, in an Irish hand, there sweeps his Syrian steel.
 Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their store,
 There's *one* hearth well avenged in the sack of Baltimore !

Midsummer morn, in woodland nigh, the birds begin to sing,
 They see not now the milking maids—deserted is the spring !
 Midsummer day, this gallant rides from distant Bandon's town,
 Those hookers crossed from stormy Skull, that skiff from Affadowan.
 They only found the smoking walls with neighbours' blood besprent,
 And on the strewed and trampled beach awhile they wildly went,
 Then dashed to sea, and passed Cape Clear, and saw five leagues
 The pirate galleys vanishing that ravaged Baltimore. [before,

Oh ! some must tug the galley's oar and some must tend the steed,
 This boy will bear a Scheik's chibouk, and that a Bey's jerreed.
 Oh ! some are for the arsenals by beauteous Dardanelles,
 And some are in the caravan to Mecca's sandy dells.
 The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Dey ;
 She's safe ! she's dead ! she stabbed him in the midst of his serai !
 And, when to die a death of fire, that noble maid they bore,
 She only smiled—O'Driscoll's child !—she thought of Baltimore.

'Tis two long years since sank the town beneath that bloody band,
 And all around its trampled hearths a larger concourse stand,
 Where, high upon a gallows tree, a yelling wretch is seen,
 'Tis Hackett of Dungarvon, he who steered the Algerine.
 He fell amid a sullen shout, with scarce a passing prayer,
 For he had slain the kith and kin of many a hundred there.
 Some muttered of MacMurchadh, who had brought the Norman o'er ;
 Some cursed him with Iscariot, that day in Baltimore.

The more we study this ballad, the more extraordinary does it appear that it should have been the work of an unpractised hand. Not only is it full of spirit and of melody, qualities not incompatible with inexperience in poetical composition, but the artistic merit is so great. Picture succeeds to picture, each perfect in itself, and each conducing to the effect of the whole. There is not a careless line, or a word out of place ; and how the epithets paint : “fibrous sod,” “heavy balm,” “shearing sword !” The Oriental portion is as complete in what the French call local colour as the Irish. He was learned, was Thomas Davis, and wrote of nothing that he could not have taught. It is something that he should have left a poem like this, altogether untinged by party politics, for the pride and admiration of all who share a common language, whether Celt or Saxon.

MAIRE BHAN ASTOIR*—“ FAIR MARY MY TREASURE.”

IRISH EMIGRANT SONG.

In a valley far away,
 With my Maire bhan astoir,
 Short would be the summer day,
 Ever loving more and more.
 Winter days would all grow long
 With the light her heart would pour,
 With her kisses and her song
 And her loving maith go léor.†
 Fond is Maire bhan astoir,
 Fair is Maire bhan astoir,
 Sweet as ripple on the shore
 Sings my Maire bhan astoir.

Oh ! her sire is very proud,
 And her mother cold as stone ;
 But her brother bravely vowed
 She should be my bride alone ;
 For he knew I loved her well,
 And he knew she loved me too,
 So he sought their pride to quell,
 But 'twas all in vain to sue.
 True is Maire bhan astoir,
 Tried is Maire bhan astoir,
 Had I wings I'd never soar
 From my Maire bhan astoir.

* Pronounced Maur-ya Vaun Asthore.

† Much plenty, or in abundance.

There are lands where manly toil
 Surely reaps the crop it sows.
 Glorious woods and teeming soil
 Where the broad Missouri flows;
 Through the trees the smoke shall rise
 From our hearth with maith go léor,
 There shall shine the happy eyes
 Of my Maire bhan astoir.
 Mild is Maire bhan astoir,
 Mine is Maire bhan astoir,
 Saints will watch about the door
 Of my Maire bhan astoir.

I subjoin one of the lyrics, a ballad of the "Brigade," which produced so much effect, when printed on the broad sheet of the "Nation." It is a graphic and dramatic battle-song, full of life and action; too well calculated to excite that most excitable people, for whose gratification it was written.

FONTENOY. (1745.)

Thrice, at the huts of Fontenoy, the English column failed;
 And twice, the lines of Saint Antoine the Dutch in vain assailed;
 For town and slope were filled with fort and flanking battery,
 And well they swept the English ranks and Dutch auxiliary.
 As vainly through De Barri's wood the British soldiers burst,
 The French artillery drove them back, diminished and dispersed.
 The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,
 And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.
 On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!
 And mustering come his chosen troops like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread,
 Their cannon blaze in front and flank, Lord Hay is at their head.
 Steady they step adown the slope, steady they mount the hill,
 Steady they load, steady they fire, moving right onward still,
 Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace blast,
 Through rampart, trench, and palisade, and bullets showering fast
 And on the open plain above they rose and kept their course,
 With ready fire and grim resolve, that mocked at hostile force;
 Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks,
 They break as breaks the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean
 banks!

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round;
 As stubble to the lava tide, French squadrons strew the ground;
 Bomb shell and grape and round-shot tore, still on they marched
 and fired;
 Fast, from each volley, grenadier and voltigeur retired.
 "Push on, my household cavalry!" King Louis madly cried:
 To death they rush, but rude their shock, not unavenged they died.
 On, through the camp the column trod, King Louis turned his reiu;
 "Not yet, my liege," Saxe interposed, "the Irish troops remain."

And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo
Had not these exiles ready been, fresh, vehement and true.

“Lord Clare,” he says, “you have your wish—there are your Saxon foes !”
The Marshal almost smiles to see how furiously he goes !
How fierce the look these exiles wore, who’re wont to be so gay !
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts to-day ;
The treaty broken ere the ink wherein ‘twas writ could dry ; [cry ;
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women’s parting
Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country overthrown ;
Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,
Rushed on to fight a nobler band than these proud exiles were.

O’Brien’s voice is hoarse with joy, as, halting, he commands,
“Fix bayonets—charge !” Like mountain storm rush on these
fiery bands !—

Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,
Yet, mustering all the strength they have, they make a gallant show.
They dress their ranks upon the hill, to face that battle-wind ;
Their bayonets the breakers’ foam ; like rocks the men behind !
One volley crashes from their line, when through the surging smoke,
With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish broke.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza !
“Revenge ! remember Limerick ! dash down the Sacsanagh !

Like lions leaping at a fold, when mad with hunger’s pang,
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang ;
Bright was their steel, ‘tis bloody now, their guns are filled with gore ;
Thro’ shattered ranks and severed files and trampled flags they tore ;
The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied, scattered, fled ;
The green hill-side is matted close with dying and with dead.
Across the plain and far away passed on that hideous wrack,
While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,
With bloody plumes the Irish stand : the field is fought and won !

John Banim was the founder of that school of Irish novelists, which, always excepting its blameless purity, so much resembles the modern romantic French school, that if it were possible to suspect Messieurs Victor Hugo, Eugène Sue, and Alexandre Dumas of reading the English which they never approach without such ludicrous blunders, one might fancy that many-volumed tribe to have stolen their peculiar inspiration from the O’Hara family. Of a certainty the tales of Mr. Banim were purely original. They had no precursors either in our own language or in any other, and they produced accordingly the sort of impression more vivid than durable.

which highly-coloured and deeply-shadowed novelty is sure to make on the public mind. But they are also intensely national. They reflect Irish scenery, Irish character, Irish crime, and Irish virtue, with a general truth, which, in spite of their tendency to melodramatic effects, will keep them fresh and life-like for many a day after the mere fashion of the novel of the season shall be past and gone. The last of his works, especially "Father Connell," contains the portrait of a parish priest, so exquisitely simple, natural, and tender, that in the whole range of fiction I know nothing more charming. The subject was one that the author loved ; witness the following rude, rugged, homely song, which explains so well the imperishable ties which unite the peasant to his pastor :—

SOGGARTH AROON.*

Am I the slave they say,
Soggarth aroon ?
Since you did show the way,
Soggarth aroon,
Their slave no more to be,
While they would work with me
Ould Ireland's slavery,
Soggarth aroon ?

Why not her poorest man,
Soggarth aroon,
Try and do all he can,
Soggarth aroon,
Her commands to fulfil
Of his own heart and will,
Side by side with you still,
Soggarth aroon ?

Loyal and brave to you,
Soggarth aroon,
Yet be no slave to you,
Soggarth aroon,
Nor out of fear to you
Stand up so near to you—
Och ! out of fear to *you*,
Soggarth aroon !

Who in the winter night,
Soggarth aroon,
When the could blast did bite,
Soggarth aroon,

* Anglicè, Priest dear.

Came to my cabin-door,
 And on my earthen floor
 Knelt by me sick and poor,
 Soggarth aroon ?
 Who on the marriage-day,
 Soggarth aroon,
 Made the poor cabin gay,
 Soggarth aroon,
 And did both laugh and sing,
 Making our hearts to ring
 At the poor christening,
 Soggarth aroon ?
 Who as friend only met,
 Soggarth aroon ;
 Never did flout me yet,
 Soggarth aroon,
 And when my hearth was dim,
 Gave, while his eye did brim,
 What I should give to him,
 Soggarth aroon ?
 Och ! you, and only you,
 Soggarth aroon !
 And for this I was true to you,
 Soggarth aroon ;
 In love they'll never shake,
 When for ould Ireland's sake,
 We a true part did take,
 Soggarth aroon !

There is a small and little-known volume of these rough peasant-ballads, full of the same truth and intensity of feeling, -- songs which seem destined to be sung at the wakes and patterns of Ireland. But, to say nothing of his fine classical tragedy of "Damon and Pythias," Mr. Banim, so successful in the delineation of the sweet, delicate, almost idealised girl of the people, has written at least one song that may rival Gerald Griffin in grace and sentiment. A lover sings it to his mistress :—

'Tis not for love of gold I go,
 'Tis not for love of fame ;
 Though Fortune may her smile bestow,
 And I may win a name,
 Ailleen ;
 And I may win a name.
 And yet it is for gold I go,
 And yet it is for fame ;
 That they may deck another brow,
 And bless another name,
 Ailleen ;
 And bless another name.

Is it not strange that with such ballads as these of John Banim, Thomas Davis, and Gerald Griffin before us, Mr. Moore, that great and undoubted wit, should pass in the highest English circles for the only song-writer of Ireland ? Do people really prefer flowers made of silk and cambric, of gum and wire, the work of human hands, however perfect, to such as Mother Earth sends forth in the gushing spring-time, full of sap and odour, sparkling with sunshine, and dripping with dew ?

I can find no regular life of our poet: nothing beyond a chance record of a kind word to one young struggling countryman, and a kind act to another. He died in the vigour of his age; married, and, as I fear, poor. The too frequent story of a man of genius.

III.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

VISIT TO TAPLOW.

THOMAS NOEL.

THREE summers ago I spent a few pleasant weeks among some of the loveliest scenery of our great river. The banks of the Thames, always beautiful, are nowhere more delightful than in the neighbourhood of Maidenhead,—one side ramparded by the high, abrupt chalky cliffs of Buckinghamshire ; the other edging gently away into our rich Berkshire meadows, chequered with villages, villas, and woods.

My own temporary home was one of singular beauty,—a snug cottage at Taplow, looking over a garden full of honeysuckles, lilies, and roses, to a miniature terrace, whose steps led down into the water, or rather into our little boat ; the fine old bridge at Maidenhead just below us ; the magnificent woods of Cliefden, crowned with the lordly mansion (now, alas ! a second time burnt down), rising high above ; and the broad majestic river, fringed with willow and alder, gay with an ever-changing variety—the trim pleasure-yacht, the busy barge, or the punt of the solitary angler—gliding by placidly and slowly, the very image of calm and conscious power. No pleasanter residence, through the sultry months of July and August, than the Bridge Cottage at Taplow !

Besides the natural advantages of the situation, we were within reach of many interesting places, of which we, as strangers, contrived—as strangers usually do—to see a great deal more than the actual residents.

A six-mile drive took us to the lordly towers of Windsor—the most queenly of our palaces—with the adjuncts that so well become the royal residence, St. George's Chapel and Eton College, fitting shrines of learning and devotion ! Windsor was full of charm. The ghostly shadow of a tree, that is, or passes for, Herne's oak—for the very man of whom we inquired our way maintained that the tree was apocryphal, although in such cases I hold it wisest and pleasantest to believe—the quaint old town itself, with the localities immortalised by Sir John and Sir Hugh, Dame Quickly and Justice

Shallow, and all the company of the Merry Wives, had to me an unfailing attraction. To Windsor we drove again and again, until the pony spontaneously turned his head Windsor-ward.

Then we reviewed the haunts of Gray, the house at Stoke Pogis, and the churchyard where he is buried, and which contains the touching epitaph wherein the pious son commemorates "the careful mother of many children, one of whom only had the misfortune to survive her." To that spot we drove one bright summer-day, and we were not the only visitants. It was pleasant to see one admirer seated under a tree, sketching the church, and another party, escorted by the clergyman, walking reverently through it. Stoke Pogis, however, is not without its rivals ; and we also visited the old church at Upton, whose ivy-mantled tower claims to be the veritable tower of the "Elegy." A very curious scene did that old church exhibit—that of an edifice not yet decayed, but abandoned to decay, an incipient ruin, such as probably might have been paralleled in the monasteries of England after the Reformation, or in the churches of France after the first Revolution. The walls were still standing, still full of monuments and monumental inscriptions : in some the gilding was yet fresh ; and one tablet, especially, had been placed there very recently, commemorating the talent and virtues of the celebrated astronomer, Sir John Herschel. But the windows were denuded of their glass, the font broken, the pews dismantled ; whilst on the tottering reading-desk one of the great Prayer-books, all mouldy and damp, still lay open—last vestige of the holy services with which it once resounded. Another church had been erected, but it looked new and naked, and everybody seemed to regret the old place of worship, the roof of which was remarkable for the purity of its design.*

Another of our excursions was to Ockwells—a curious and beautiful specimen of domestic architecture in the days before the Tudors. Strange it seems to me that no one has exactly imitated that graceful front, with its steep roof terminated on either side by two projecting gables, the inner one lower than the other, adorned with oak-carving, regular and delicate as that on an ivory fan. The porch has equal elegance. One

* Since writing this paper, the fine old church in question has been completely restored.

almost expects to see some baronial hawking-party, or some bridal procession, issue from its recesses. The great hall, although its grand open roof has been barbarously closed up, still retains its fine proportions, its daïs, its music-gallery, and the long range of windows, still adorned with the mottos and escutcheons of the Norreys, their kindred and allies. It has long been used as a farm-house ; and one marvels that the painted windows should have remained uninjured through four centuries of neglect and change. Much that was interesting has disappeared, but enough still remains to gratify those who love to examine the picturesque dwellings of our ancestors. The noble staircase, the iron-studded door, the prodigious lock, the gigantic key (too heavy for a woman to wield), the cloistered passages, the old-fashioned buttery-hatch, give a view not merely of the degree of civilisation of the age, but of the habits and customs of familiar daily life.

Another drive took us to the old grounds of Lady Place, where, in demolishing the house, care had been taken to preserve the vaults in which the great Whig leaders wrote and signed the famous letter to William of Orange which drove James the Second from the throne. A gloomy place it is now—a sort of underground ruin—and gloomy enough the patriots must have found it on that memorable occasion ; the tombs of the monks (it had formerly been a monastery) under their feet, the rugged walls around them, and no ray of light, except the lanterns they may have brought with them or the torches which they lit. Surely the signature of that summons which secured the liberties of England would make an impressive picture—Lord Somers in the foreground, and the other Whig statesmen grouped around him. A Latin inscription records a visit made by George III. to the vaults ; and truly it is amongst the places that monarchs would do well to visit—full of stern lessons !

Chief pilgrimage of all was one that led us first to Beaconsfield, through the delightful lanes of Buckinghamshire, with their luxuriance of hedge-row timber, and their patches of heathy common. There we paid willing homage to all that remained of the habitation consecrated by the genius of Edmund Burke. Little is left, beyond gates and outbuildings, for the house has been burnt down and the grounds dissparkled ; but still some of his walks remained, and an old well and

traces of an old garden—and pleasant it was to tread where such a man had trodden, and to converse with the few who still remembered him. We saw, too, the stalwart yeoman who had the honour, not only of furnishing to Sir Joshua the model of his "Infant Hercules," but even of suggesting the subject. Thus it happened. Passing a few days with Mr. Burke at his favourite retirement, the great painter accompanied his host on a visit to his bailiff. A noble boy lay sprawling in the cradle in the room where they sat. His mother would fain have removed him, but Sir Joshua, then commissioned to paint a picture for the Empress Catherine, requested that the child might remain, sent with all speed for palette and easel, and accomplished his task with that success which so frequently waits upon a sudden inspiration. It is remarkable that the good farmer, whose hearty cordial kindness I shall not soon forget, has kept in a manner most unusual the promise of his sturdy infancy, and makes as near an approach to the proportions of the fabled Hercules as ever Buckinghamshire yeoman displayed.

Beaconsfield, however, and even the cherished retirement of Burke, was by no means the goal of our pilgrimage. The true shrine was to be found four miles farther, in the small cottage at Chalfont St. Giles, where Milton found a refuge during the Great Plague of London.

The road wound through lanes still shadier and hedge-rows still richer, where the tall trees rose from banks overhung with fern, intermixed with spikes of purple fox-glove; sometimes broken by a bit of mossy park-paling, sometimes by the light shades of a beech-wood, until at last we reached the quiet and secluded village whose very first dwelling was consecrated by the abode of the great poet.

It is a small tenement of four rooms, one on either side the door, standing in a little garden, and having its gable to the road. A short inscription, almost hidden by the foliage of the vine, tells that Milton once lived within those sacred walls. The cottage has been so seldom visited, is so little desecrated by thronging admirers, and has suffered so little from alteration or decay, and all about it has so exactly the serene and tranquil aspect that one should have expected to see in an English village two centuries ago, that it requires but a slight effort of fancy to image to ourselves the old blind bard still

sitting in that little parlour, or sunning himself on the garden-seat beside the well. Milton is said to have corrected at Chalfont some of the sheets of the "Paradise Lost." The "Paradise Regained" he certainly composed there. One loves to think of him in that calm retreat,—to look round that poor room and think how Genius ennobles all she touches ! Heaven forefend that change in any shape, whether of embellishment or of decay, should fall upon that cottage !

Another resort of ours—not a pilgrimage, but a haunt—was the forest of old pollards, known by the name of Burnham Beeches. A real forest it is—six hundred acres in extent, and varied by steep declivities, wild dells, and tangled dingles. The ground, clothed with the fine short turf where the thyme and the harebell love to grow, is partly covered with luxuriant fern ; and the juniper and the holly form a fitting underwood for those magnificent trees, hollowed by age, whose profuse canopy of leafy boughs seems so much too heavy for the thin rind by which it is supported. Mr. Grote has a house here on which we looked with reverence ; and in one of the loveliest spots we came upon a monument erected by Mrs. Grote in memory of Mendelssohn, and enriched by an elegant inscription from her pen.

We were never weary of wandering among the Burnham Beeches ; sometimes taking Dropmore by the way, where the taste of the late Lord Grenville created from a barren heath a perfect Eden of rare trees and matchless flowers. But even better than amid that sweet woodland scene did I love to ramble by the side of the Thames, as it bounded the beautiful grounds of Lord Orkney, or the magnificent demesne of Sir George Warrender, the verdant lawns of Cliefden.

That place also is full of memories. There it was that the famous Duke of Buckingham fought his no less famous duel with Lord Shrewsbury, whilst the fair countess, dressed, rather than disguised, as a page, held the horse of her victorious paramour. We loved to gaze on that princely mansion, repeating to each other the marvellous lines in which our two matchless satirists have immortalised the Duke's follies, and doubting which portrait were the best. We may at least be sure that no third painter will excel them.* Alas ! who reads

* And yet they have been almost equalled by a French artist ; Count Anthony Hamilton in the "Mémoires de Grammont."

Pope or Dryden now ! I am afraid, very much afraid, that to many a fair young reader these celebrated characters will be as good as manuscript. I will at all events try the experiment. Here they be :—

“ In the first rank of these did Zimri stand :
 A man so various, that he seemed to be
 Not one, but all mankind’s epitome ;
 Stiff in opinion, always in the wrong,
 Was everything by starts and nothing long ;
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,
 Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon ;
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
 With something new to wish or to enjoy ! ”

DRYDEN, *Absalom and Achitophel*.

Now for the little hunchback of Twickenham—

“ In the worst inn’s worst room, with mat half hung,
 The walls of plaster, and the floor of dung ;
 On once a flock-bed, but repaired with straw,
 With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw,
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed,
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red :
 Great Villiers lies :—but ah, how changed from him,
 That life of pleasure and that soul of whim,
 Gallant and gay in Cliefden’s proud alcove,
 The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love !
 Or just as gay at council ’mid the ring
 Of mimic statesmen and their merry king !
 No wit to flatter left of all his store ;
 No fool to laugh at, which he valued more ;
 There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends
 And fame, the lord of useless thousands ends ! ”

POPE, *Moral Essays*.

The charming walk at Lord Orkney’s, which I was so kindly permitted to enjoy, and which I did enjoy so thoroughly, ran between the noble river shaded and overhung by trees, and the high steep chalky cliff, also clothed with trees to the very summit ; trees of all kinds, the oak, the beech, the ash, the elm, the yew, the cypress, the pine, the juniper. The woodland path—no trimly-kept walk, but a rude narrow cart-track—thredded its way amidst nooks so closely planted and branches so interlaced, that oftentimes the water only glanced upon us by glimpses through the foliage, just as in looking upward we caught a gleam of the blue sky. Sometimes again it was totally hidden, and we only felt the presence of the

river by the refreshing coolness of the breeze, and the gentle rippling of the slow current ; while, sometimes, a sudden opening would give to view some rude landing-place where the boats were laden with chalk ; or a vista accidentally formed by the felling of some large tree would show us an old mill across the stream framed in by meeting branches like a picture.

The Taplow spring, with its pretty cottage for picnics, often proved the end of our evening walks. I loved to see the gushing of that cool clear sparkling spring, plashing over the huge stones that seemed meant to restrain it, sporting in pools and eddies, and lost almost as soon as it wells from the earth amid the waters of the silver Thames.

Steep as it seems and is, the chalky cliff is not inaccessible. Here and there it recedes from the river, sometimes hollowed into deep caves, and then again it advances with a more gradual slope, so as to admit of zig-zag walks practised to the summit. These walks, almost buried amongst the rich foliage, have a singular attraction in their steepness and their difficulty. Long branches of ivy trail from the cliff in every direction, mingled at this season with a gorgeous profusion of the clinging woodbine, the yellow St. John's-wort, and the large purple flowers of the Canterbury bell. Our steps were literally impeded by these long garlands. Our feet were perpetually entangled in them. We crushed them as we passed.

The view from the Hermit's hut, on the height, is amongst those that can never be forgotten. We looked over the tons of the tall trees, down a sheer descent of I know not how many hundred feet, to a weir upon the Thames, foaming and brawling under our very eyes. Just beyond was one of the loveliest reaches of the river, with Cookham bridge and the fine old church forming a picture in itself. Then came a wide extent of field and meadow, mansion and village, tower and spire, the rich woods of Berkshire interspersed amongst all, the noble river winding away into the distance, and the far-off hills mingling with the clouds, until we knew not which was earth or which was sky.

Very pleasant was that sojourn by the Thames side ; and amongst the pleasures that I most value, one of those which I brought home with me, and trust never to lose, must be reckoned the becoming acquainted with Mr. Noel's " Rhymes

and Roundelayes," and forming, not an acquaintance, for we have never met, but a friendship with the author.

Mr. Noel resides in a beautiful place in that beautiful neighbourhood, leading the life of an accomplished but somewhat secluded country gentleman ;—a most enviable life, and one well adapted to the observation of nature and to the production of poetry, but by no means so well calculated to make a volume of poems extensively known. Hence it is that the elegant and graphic description of Thames scenery which I subjoin, although it has been published nearly ten years, will probably have the charm of novelty to many of my readers :—

A THAMES VOYAGE.

Gracefully, gracefully glides our bark
On the bosom of Father Thames,
And before her bows the wavelets dark
Break into a thousand gems.

The kingfisher not straighter darts
Down the stream to his sweet mate's nest,
Than our arrowy pinnace shoots and parts
The river's yielding breast.

We have passed the chalk-cliff on whose crown
The hermit's hut doth cling,
And the bank, whose hanging woods look down
On the smile of Cliefden spring.

We are come where Hedsor's crested fount
Pours forth its babbling rill,
And where the charmed eye loves to mount
To the small church on the hill.

On, like a hawk upon the wing,
Our little wherry flies ;
Against her bows the ripples sing,
And the wavelets round her rise.

In view is Cookham's ivied tower ;
And, up yon willowy reach,
Enfolding many a fairy bower,
Wave Bisham's woods of beech.

O'er Marlow's loveliest vale they look,
And its spire that seeks the skies ;
And afar, to where in its meadow-nook
Medmenham's Abbey lies.

Still on, still on, as we smoothly glide,
There are charms that woo the eye,—
Boughs waving green in the pictured tide,
And the blue reflected sky.

Swift dragon-flies, with their gauzy wings,
 Flit glistening to and fro,
 And murmuring hosts of moving things
 O'er the waters glance and glow.

There are spots where nestle wild flowers small
 With many a mingling gleam ;
 Where the broad flag waves, and the bulrush tall
 Nods still to the thrusting stream.

The Forget-me-not on the water's edge
 Reveals her lovely hue,
 Where the broken bank, between the sedge,
 Is embroidered with her blue
 And in bays where matted foliage weaves
 A shadowy arch on high,
 Serene on broad and bronze-like leaves,
 The virgin lilies lie.

Fair fall those bonny flowers ! O how
 I love their petals bright !
 Smoother than Ariel's moonlit brow !
 The Water-Nymph's delight !

Those milk-white cups with a golden core,
 Like marble lamps, that throw
 So soft a light on the bordering shore,
 And the waves that round them flow !

Steadily, steadily, speeds our bark,
 O'er the silvery whirls she springs ;
 While merry as lay of morning lark
 The watery carol rings.

Lo ! a sailing swan, with a little fleet
 Of cygnets by her side,
 Pushing her snowy bosom sweet
 Against the bubbling tide !

And see—was ever a lovelier sight ?
 One little bird afloat
 On its mother's back, 'neath her wing so white,---
 A beauteous living boat !

The threatful male, as he sails ahead,
 Like a champion proud and brave,
 Makes, with his ruffling wings outspread,
 Fierce jerks along the wave.

He tramples the stream, as we pass him by.
 In wrath from its surface springs,
 And after our boat begins to fly,
 With loudly-flapping wings.

Gracefully, gracefully glides our bark,
 And the curling current stems,
 Where the willows cast their shadows dark,
 And the ripples gleam like gems ;
 Oh, there's many a charming scene to mark
 From the bosom of Father Thames !

The following powerful lines are better known, and serve to show the variety of Mr. Noel's talent :—

THE PAUPER'S DRIVE.

There's a grim one-horse hearse in a jolly round trot ;
To the churchyard a pauper is going, I wot ;
The road it is rough, and the hearse has no springs,
And hark to the dirge that the sad driver sings :—

Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

Oh, where are the mourners ? Alas ! there are none ;
He has left not a gap in the world now he's gone ;
Not a tear in the eye of child, woman or man :—
To the grave with his carcase as fast as you can.

Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

What a jolting and creaking and splashing and din !
The whip how it cracks, and the wheels how they spin !
How the dirt right and left o'er the hedges is hurled !
The pauper at length makes a noise in the world.

Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

Poor pauper defunct ! he has made some approach
To gentility now that he's stretched in a coach ;
He's taking a drive in his carriage at last,
But it will not be long if he goes on so fast !

Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

But a truce to this strain ! for my soul it is sad
To think that a heart in humanity clad
Should make, like the brutes, such a desolate end.
And depart from the light without leaving a friend.

Bear softly his bones over the stones.
Though a pauper, he's one whom his Maker yet owns

The author tells me that this incident was taken from the life. He witnessed such a funeral—a coffin in a parish hearse driven at full speed.

IV.

OLD AUTHORS.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

As, in the case of Ben Jonson, posterity values his writings for very different qualities from those which obtained his high reputation amongst his contemporaries, so it has happened to Cowley.

Praised in his day as a great poet, the head of the school of poets called metaphysical, he is now chiefly known by those prose essays, all too short and all too few, which, whether for thought or for expression, have rarely been excelled by any writer in any language. They are eminently distinguished for the grace, the finish, and the clearness which his verse too often wants. That there is one cry which pervades them—vanity of vanities! all is vanity!—that there is an almost ostentatious longing for obscurity and retirement, may be accounted for by the fact that at an early age Cowley was thrown among the cavaliers of the civil wars, sharing the exile and the return of the Stuarts, and doubtless disgusted, as so pure a writer was pretty sure to be, by a dissolute Court, with whom he would find it easier to sympathise in its misery than in its triumph. Buckingham, with the fellow-feeling of talent for talent, appears to have been kind to him; and when he fled from the world (not very far—he found his beloved solitude at Chertsey), it is satisfactory to know that he so far escaped the proverbial ingratitude of the Restoration, as to carry with him an income sufficient for his moderate wants. He did not long survive a retirement which, Sprat says, in a curious life prefixed to the edition of his works in 1719, “agreed better with his mind than his body.”

It is difficult to select from a volume so abundant in riches, but I will begin by his opinion of theatrical audiences contained in “The Preface to the Cutter of Coleman Street:”—

“There is no writer but may fail sometimes in point of wit; and it is no less frequent for the auditors to fail in point of judgment. I perceive plainly by daily experience that Fortune is mistress of the theatre, as Tully says it is of all popular assemblies. No man can tell sometimes from whence the invisible winds rise that move them. There are a multitude of people who are truly and only spectators of a play without any use of their understanding; and these carry it sometimes by the strength of their numbers. There are others who use their understandings too much; who think it a sign of weakness and stupidity to let anything pass by them unattacked, and that the honour of their judgment (as some brutals imagine of their courage) consists in quarrelling with everything. We are, therefore, wonderful wise men, and have a fine business of it, we who spend our time in

poetry. I do sometimes laugh, and am often angry with myself when I think on it ; and if I had a son inclined by nature to the same folly, I believe I should bind him from it by the strictest conjurations of a paternal blessing. For what can be more ridiculous than to labour to give men delight, whilst they labour on their part more earnestly to take offence ? to expose oneself voluntarily and frankly to all the dangers of that narrow passage to unprofitable fame, which is defended by rude multitudes of the ignorant, and by armed troops of the malicious ? If we do ill, many discover it, and all despise us. If we do well, but few men find it out, and fewer entertain it kindly. If we commit errors, there is no pardon ; if we could do wonders, there would be but little thanks, and that too extorted from unwilling givers."

Of course his play had been coldly received. Here is another bit of autobiography, singularly interesting, as coming from one who, although he never could retain the rules of grammar, was an eminent scholar, and the most precocious of all poets. It forms part of the essay, headed "Of Myself."

"It is a hard and a nice subject for a man to write of himself. It pains his own heart to say anything of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of my offending him in that kind ; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune allow me any materials for that vanity.

* * * * *

"As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew, or was capable of guessing, what the world or the glories or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others by an antipathy, imperceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of roaming about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion if I could find him of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my master could never prevail on me by any persuasions or encouragements to learn without book the common rules of grammar ; in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift

to do the same exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind that I am now (which, I confess, I wonder at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode, which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish, but of this part which I have set down (if a very little were corrected) I should hardly now be much ashamed :—

“ This only grant me, that my means may lie,
 Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
 Some honour I would have,
 Not from great deeds, but good alone ;
 The unknown are better than ill known
 Rumour can ope the grave.
 Acquaintance I would have, but when’t depends,
 Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

“ Books should, as business, entertain the light,
 And sleep as undisturbed as death, the night.
 My house, a cottage more
 Than palace ; and should fitting be
 For all my use, no luxury.
 My garden painted o’er
 With nature’s hand, not art’s ; and pleasures yield,
 Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

“ Thus would I double my life’s fading space,
 For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
 And in this true delight,
 These unbought sports, this happy state,
 I would not fear, nor wish my fate ;
 But boldly say each night,
 To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
 Or in clouds hide them—I have lived to-day.

“ You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace) ; and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamp’t first, or rather engraved these characters in me ; they were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grows proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there : for I remember when I began to read and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother’s parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to

lie Spenser's works. This I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this); and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers; so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet.

“With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the University; but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars to me the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the Court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant (for that was the state then of the English and French Courts); yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw clearly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewilder or entice me, when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm although I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it: a storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect:—

“Well, then, I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.

“ And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty’s happy Restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortune: but I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself; and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it:—

“ Thou neither great at court, nor in the war,
Nor at the exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar.
Content thyself with the small barren praise,
Which neglected verse doth raise.

“ However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on. I cast myself into it a *corps perdu* without making capitulations, or taking counsel of Fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, Take thy ease. I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoilt the happiness of an emperor, as well as mine. Yet do I neither repent nor alter my course, *non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum*, nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

“ Nor by me e’er shall you,
You of all names the sweetest and the best,
You, Muses, books and liberty, and rest;
You, gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.”

The same vein runs through the charming Essay “ Of Obscurity:”—

* * * “ The pleasantest condition of life is in *incognito*. What a brave privilege is it to be free from all contentions, from all envying, or being envied, from receiving or paying all kinds of ceremonies! It is, in my mind, a very delightful pastime for two good and agreeable friends to travel up and down together in places where they are by nobody known, nor know anybody. It was the case of Æneas and his Achates, when they walked invisibly about the fields and streets of Carthage. Venus herself,

“ A veil of thickened air around them cast,
That none might know or see them as they past.

“ The common story of Demosthenes’ confession, that he had taken a great pleasure in hearing of a basket-woman say, as he passed, ‘ This is that Demosthenes,’ is wonderfully ridiculous from so solid an orator. I myself have often met with that temptation to vanity (if it were any); but am so far from finding it any pleasure, that it only makes me run faster from the place till I get (as it were) out of sight-shot. Democritus relates, and in such a manner as if he gloried in the good fortune and commodity of it, that when he came to Athens, nobody there did so much as take notice of him; and Epicurus lived there very well, that is, lay hid many years in his gardens, so famous since that time, with his friend Metrodorus; after whose death, making in one of his letters a kind commemoration of the happiness which they two had enjoyed together, he adds at last, that he thought it no disparagement to those qualifications of their life, that, in the midst of the most talked-of and talking country in the world, they had lived so long, not only without fame, but almost without being heard of. And yet, within a few years afterwards, there were no two names of men more known, or more generally celebrated. If we engage into a large acquaintance, and various familiarities, we set open our gates to the invaders of most of our time: we expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinence, which would make a wise man tremble to think of. Now, as for being known much by sight, and pointed at, I cannot comprehend the honour that lies in that. Whatsoever it be, every mountebank has it more than the best orator, and the hangman more than the Lord Chief Justice of a city. Every creature has it, both of nature and art, if it be anyways extraordinary. It was as often said, This is that Bucephalus, or This is that Incitatus, when they were led prancing through the streets, as This is that Alexander, or This is that Domitian; and truly for the latter, I take Incitatus to have been a much more honourable beast than his master, and more deserving the consulship than he the empire.

“ I love and commend a true, good fame, because it is the shadow of virtue; not that it doth any good to the body which it accompanies, but it is an efficacious shadow, and like

that of St. Peter, cures the diseases of others. The best kind of glory, no doubt, is that which is reflected from honesty, such as was the glory of Cato and Aristides ; but it was painful to them both, and is seldom beneficial to any man while he lives. What it is to him after his death I cannot say, because I love not philosophy merely notional and conjectural, and no man who has made the experiment has been so kind as to come back to inform us. Upon the whole matter, I account a person who has a moderate mind and fortune, and lives in the conversation of two or three agreeable friends with little commerce in the world besides, who is esteemed well enough by his few neighbours that know him, and is truly irreproachable by anybody ; and so after a healthful quiet life before the great inconveniences of old age, goes more silently out of it than he came in (for I would not have him so much as cry in his exit) ; this innocent deceiver of the world, as Horace calls him, this *muta persona*, I take to have been more happy in his part than the greatest actors that fill the stage with show and noise, nay even than Augustus himself, who asked with his last breath whether 'he had not played his farce very well.'

We find another graceful bit of autobiography in an *Essay* addressed to Evelyn, and called "The Garden :—"

"I never had any other desire so strong and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always that I might be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them and study of nature—

"And there (with no design beyond my wall) whole and entire to lie,
In no unactive ease and no unglorious poverty ;

or, as Virgil has said, shorter and better for me, that I might there

"‘Studiis florere ignobilis oti.’

"(Although I could wish that he had rather said, 'nobilis oti,' when he spoke of his own.) But several accidents of my ill-fortune have disappointed me hitherto, and do still of that felicity ; for though I have made the first and hardest step to it by abandoning all ambitions and hopes in this world, and by retiring from the noise of all business, and almost com-

pany, yet I stick still in the inn of a hired house and garden amongst weeds and rubbish ; and without that pleasantest work of human industry, the improvement of something which we call (not very properly, but yet we call) our own. I am gone out from Sodom, but I am not yet arrived at my little Zoar. O let me escape thither (is it not a little one ?) and my soul shall live ! I do not look back yet, but I have been forced to stop and make too many halts. You may wonder, Sir (for this seems a little too extravagant and pindarical for prose), what I mean by all this preface ; it is to let you know that though I have missed, like a chemist, my great end, yet I account my affections and endeavours well rewarded by something that I have met with, by the bye, which is, that they have procured to me some part in your kindness and esteem."

Here is a fine passage from the *Essay "Of Solitude"*—

* * * "Happy had it been for Hannibal, if adversity could have taught him as much wisdom as was learnt by Scipio from the highest prosperities. This would be no wonder, if it were as truly as it is colourably and wittily said by Monsieur de Montaigne, 'That ambition itself might teach us to love solitude ; there is nothing that does so much hate to have companions.' It is true it loves to have its elbows free ; it detests to have company on either side ; but it delights, above all things, in a train behind, ay, and a cheer too before it. And the greatest part of men are so far from the opinion of that noble Roman, that if they chance to be at any time without company they are like a becalmed ship ; they never move but by the wind of other men's breath, and have no oars of their own to steer withal."

The whole *Essay "Of Liberty"* is full of the happiest adaptations of classical examples to Cowley's peculiar views. He speedily dismisses the public side of the question, and enlarges on the slavery to which ambitious men (Catiline unfortunate in his ambition, Cæsar prosperous) voluntarily subject themselves in the pursuit of their object. There are in this eloquent discourse many felicitous translations from Cicero and Sallust, which, taken with the specimens of Anacreon (which my readers will find further on), may lead us to lament deeply that, in that age of translators, Cowley did not devote his cherished leisure to versions of some of

the great masters of antiquity, especially the orators and historians.

I prefer, however, to give an extract from the curious fragment which he has entitled "On the Government of Oliver Cromwell"—a strange vision of which the whole tenor is strongly against the Great Protector, but into the midst of which, put, it is true, into the mouth of a bad angel, the following character of Cromwell is introduced as if by an instinct of truth and candour which the writer found it impossible to resist. Hume has inserted this character, "altered," as he says, "in some particulars," in his history. Why altered? The Scottish historian is a most clear and pleasant narrator, but surely he does not pretend to improve Cowley's prose. I give it from the original. The spokesman is the evil angel:—

"And pray, countryman," said he, very kindly and very flatteringly, "for I would not have you fall into the general error of the world, that detests and decries so extraordinary a virtue,—what can be more extraordinary than that a person of mean birth, no fortune, no eminent qualities of body, which have sometimes, or of mind which have often, raised men to the highest dignities, should have the courage to attempt, and the happiness to succeed in so improbable a design as the destruction of one of the most ancient and most solidly-founded monarchies upon the earth? that he should have the power or boldness to put his Prince and master to an open and infamous death; to banish that numerous and strongly-allied family; to do all this under the name and wages of a Parliament; to trample upon them too as he pleased, and spurn them out of doors when he grew weary of them; to raise up a new and unheard-of monster out of their ashes; to stifle that in the very infancy, and set up himself above all things that ever were called Sovereigns in England; to oppress all his enemies by arms, and all his friends afterwards by artifice; to serve all parties patiently for a while; and to command them victoriously at last; to overrun each corner of the three nations, and overcome with equal facility both the riches of the south and the poverty of the north; to be feared and courted by all foreign princes, and adopted a brother to the gods of the earth; to call together parliaments with a word of his pen, and scatter them again with the breath of

his mouth ; to be hourly and daily petitioned that he would please to be hired at the rate of two millions a-year to be the master of those who had hired him before to be their servant ; to have the estates and lives of three kingdoms as much at his disposal as was the little inheritance of his father, and to be as noble and liberal in the spending of them ; and lastly (for there is no end of all the particulars of his glory), to bequeath all this with one word to his posterity ; to die with peace at home and triumph abroad ; to be buried among kings and with more than regal solemnity, and to leave a name behind him not to be extinguished but with the whole world ; which as it is now too little for his praises, so it might have been too for his conquests, if the short time of his human life could have been stretched out to the extent of his immortal design."

Such is Cowley as a prose writer. And yet one of the most accomplished persons whom I have ever known assured me the other day, that, excepting amongst a few men of very refined taste, he believed the Essays to be little read. They will rise in demand soon, I hope ; for my friend Mr. Willmott, a writer deservedly popular, has praised them in one of his charming volumes just as they ought to be praised. It would be difficult to say more.

The poems are singularly unequal. But as I for my own private recreation am wont to resort to such innocent gaieties as the fathers of song have bequeathed to us, so I seldom fail to present them to my readers ; and it happens that this philosopher, whom we have seen dealing with high and lofty thoughts, descanting like a hermit on the joys of solitude and the delights of the country,—and in this respect his odes are nothing inferior to his Essays ;—it happens that this identical Cowley hath left behind him the pleasantest of all pleasant ballads, which could hardly have been produced by any one except a thorough man of the world. It is entitled "The Chronicle," and contains a catalogue of all the fair ladies with whom he had at different times been enamoured. Never was list more amusing. It abounds in happy traits,—especially the one which tells to half an hour how long a silly beauty may hope to retain the heart of a man of sense. The expression when the haughty Isabella, unconscious of her conquest and marching on to fresh triumphs, beats out Susan "by the

bye," has passed into one of those proverbs, of which doubtless, as of many other by-words, they who use them little guess the origin.

"The Chronicle" was written two hundred years ago. Ladies, dear ladies, if one could be sure that no man would open this book, if we were altogether in (female) parliament assembled, without a single male creature within hearing, might we not acknowledge that the sex, especially that part of it formerly called coquette, and now known by the name of flirt, is very little altered since the days of the Merry Monarch? and that a similar list compiled by some gay bachelor of Belgravia might, allowing for differences of custom and of costume, serve very well as a companion to Master Cowley's catalogue? I would not have a man read this admission for the world.

THE CHRONICLE.—A BALLAD.

Margarita first possessed,
If I remember well, my breast,
Margarita first of all;
But when awhile the wanton maid,
With my restless heart had played,
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign
To the beauteous Catherine:
Beauteous Catherine gave place
(Though loth and angry she to part
With the possession of my heart)
To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza to this hour might reign,
Had she not evil counsels ta'en:
Fundamental laws she broke,
And still new favourites she chose,
Till up in arms my passions rose,
And cast away her yoke.

Mary then, and gentle Anne,
Both to reign at once began;
Alternately they swayed,
And sometimes Mary was the fair,
And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,
And sometimes both I obeyed.

Another Mary then arose,
Who did rigorous laws impose,
A mighty tyrant she!
Long, alas! should I have been
Under that iron-sceptred queen,
Had not Rebecca set me free.

When fair Rebecca set me free,
 'Twas then a golden time with me,
 But soon those pleasures fled ;
 For the gracious princess died,
 In her youth and beauty's pride,
 And Judith reigned in her stead.

One month, three days, and half an hour,
 Judith held the sovereign power :
 Wondrous beautiful her face,
 But so weak and small her wit,
 That she to govern was unfit,
 And so Susannah took her place.

But when Isabella came,
 Armed with a resistless flame ;
 By the artillery of her eye,
 Whilst she proudly marched about,
 Greater conquest to find out,
 She beat out Susan, by the bye.

But in her place I then obeyed
 Black-eyed Bess, her viceroy-maid,
 To whom ensued a vacancy.
 Thousand worse passions then possessed
 The interregnum of my breast,—
 Bless me from such an anarchy !

Gentle Henrietta then,
 And a third Mary next began ;
 Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria,
 And then a pretty Thomasine,
 And then another Catherine,
 And then a long et cetera.

But should I now to you relate
 The strength and riches of their state,
 The powder, patches, and the pins,
 The ribands, jewels, and the rings,
 The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
 That make up all their magazines ;

If I should tell the politic arts
 To take and keep men's hearts,
 The letters, embassies, and spies,
 The frowns, the smiles, and flatteries,
 The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
 Numberless, nameless mysteries !

And all the little lime-twigs laid
 By Machiavel the waiting-maid ;
 I more voluminous should grow,
 Chiefly if I, like them, should tell
 All change of weather that befell,
 Than Holinshed or Stowe.

But I will briefer with them be,
 Since few of them were long with me
 An higher and a nobler strain
 My present empress doth claim,
 Heleonora, first o' the name,
 Whom God grant long to reign !

I add a few original stanzas, which show Cowley's characteristic merits and defects ;—very few, since I must find room for some of those translations from Anacreon, which for grace, spirit, and delicacy will never be surpassed.

OF SOLITUDE.

Hail, old patrician trees, so great and good !
 Hail, ye plebeian underwood !
 Where the poetic birds rejoice,
 And for their quiet nests and plenteous food,
 Pay with their grateful voice.

* * * *

Here let me careless and unthoughtful lying,
 Hear the soft winds above me flying ;
 With all their wanton boughs dispute,
 And the more tuneful birds to both replying,
 Nor be myself, too, mute.

A silver stream shall roll his waters near,
 Gilt with the sunbeams here and there,
 On whose enamelled bank I'll walk,
 And see how prettily they smile,
 And hear how prettily they talk.

Ah ! wretched and too solitary he,
 Who loves not his own company ;
 He'll feel the weight of it many a day,
 Unless he call in sin or vanity
 To help to bear it away.

* * * *

THE GRASSHOPPER.

From Anacreon.

Happy insect ! what can be
 In happiness compared to thee ?
 Fed with nourishment divine,
 The dewy morning's gentle wine !
 Nature waits upon thee still,
 And thy verdant cup doth fill ;
 'Tis filled wherever thou does tread,
 Nature's self, thy Ganymede.
 Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
 Happier than the happiest king !
 All the fields which thou dost see,
 All the plants belong to thee ;

All that summer hours produce,
 Fertile made with early juice :
 Man for thee doth sow and plough,
 Farmer he, and landlord thou !
 Thou dost innocently joy,
 Nor dost thy luxury destroy.
 The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
 More harmonious than he.
 Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
 Prophet of the ripened year !
 Thee Phœbus loves and doth inspire ;
 Phœbus is himself thy sire.
 To thee, of all things upon earth,
 Life is no longer than thy mirth.
 Happy insect ! happy thou,
 Dost neither age nor winter know ;
 But when thou'st drunk, and danced, and sung
 Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
 (Voluptuous and wise withal,
 Epicurean animal !)
 Sated with thy summer feast,
 Thou retir'st to endless rest.

DRINKING.

From Anacreon.

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
 And drinks and gapes for drink again ;
 The plants suck in the earth, and are
 With constant drinking fresh and fair ;
 The sea itself, which, one would think,
 Should have but little need of drink,
 Drinks ten thousand rivers up,
 So filled that they o'erflow the cup.
 The busy sun, and one would guess
 By's drunken fiery face, no less,
 Drinks up the sea, and, when he's done,
 The moon and stars drink up the sun.
 They drink and dance by their own light,
 They drink and revel all the night.
 Nothing in nature's sober found,
 But an eternal health goes round.
 Fill up the bowl, then fill it high !
 Fill all the glasses there ! for why
 Should every creature drink but I ?
 Why, men of morals, tell me why ?

GOLD.

From Anacreon.

A mighty pain to love it is,
 And 'tis a pain that pain to miss ;
 But of all pain, the greatest pain,
 It is to love, and love in vain.

Virtue now nor noble blood,
 Nor wit by love is understood,
 Gold alone does passion move,
 Gold monopolises love !
 A curse on her, and on the man
 Who this traffic first began !
 A curse on him who found the ore !
 A curse on him who digged the store !
 A curse on him who did refine it !
 A curse on him who first did coin it !
 A curse, all curses else above,
 On him who used it first in love !
 Gold begets in brethren hate ;
 Gold in families debate ;
 Gold does friendship separate ;
 Gold does civil wars create ;
 These the smallest harms of it !
 Gold, alas ! does love beget.

I cannot conclude without a word of detestation towards Sprat, who, Goth and Vandal that he was, destroyed Cowley's familiar letters.

V.

COMIC POETS.

A WET MORNING.

J. ANSTEY.

My acquaintance with "The Pleader's Guide" commenced some five-and-forty years ago, after the following fashion.

It had happened to me to make one of a large Christmas party in a large country mansion, the ladies whereof were assembled one morning dolefully enough in an elegant drawing-room. It was what sportsmen are pleased to call "a fine open day;" which, being interpreted according to the feminine version, means every variety of bad weather of which our climate is capable, excepting frost. Dirt, intolerable dirt, it always means, and rain pretty often. On the morning in question, it did not absolutely rain, it only "mizzled;" but the clouds hung over our heads in a leaden canopy, threatening a down pour: and all the signs of the earth testified to the foregone deluge that had already confined us to the house until our patience was worn to a thread. Heavy drops fell

from the eaves, the trees in the park were dripping from every bough, the fallen leaves under the trees dank with moisture, the grass as wet as if it grew in a ford, the gravel-walks soft and splashy, the carriage-drives no better than mud. In short, it was the very dismallest weather that ever answered to the name of "a fine open day;" and our sportsmen accordingly had all sallied forth to enjoy it, some to join Sir John's hounds, some to a great coursing meeting at Streatley.

As we stood at the windows bemoaning our imprisonment, we saw that the drizzle was fast settling into steady rain, and that there was no more chance of a ride on horseback, or a drive in an open carriage, than of the exhilarating walk which is the proper exercise of Christmas. All the pets about the park sympathised in our afflictions. The deer dropped off to their closest covert; the pied peacock, usually so stately and so dignified as he trailed his spotted train after him, when he came to the terrace to tap at the window for his dole of cake, actually sneaked away when summoned, in pure shame at his draggled tail; the swans looked wet through. The whole party seemed chilled and dismal, and I was secretly meditating a retreat to my mother's dressing-room, to enjoy in quiet a certain volume of "Causes Célèbres," which I had abstracted from the library for my own private solace, when everybody was startled by a proposal of the only gentleman left at home; a young barrister, who had had sufficient courage to confess his indifference to field sports, and who now, observing on the *ennui* that seemed to have seized upon the party, offered to use his best efforts to enliven us by reading aloud—by reading a law-book. Fancy the exclamations at a medicine so singularly ill-adapted to the disease! For my own part, I was not so much astonished. I suspected that the young gentleman had got hold of another volume of my dearly beloved "Causes Célèbres," and was about to minister to our discontent by reading a French trial. But the rest of the party laughed and exclaimed, and were already so much aroused by the proposal, that the cure might be said to be more than half accomplished, before our learned teacher opened the pages of the "Pleader's Guide."

I wish I could communicate to my extracts the zest that his selections derived from his admirable reading, and from the humorous manner in which he expounded the mystery of

the legal phrases, which I shall do my best to avoid, not to overtask my reader's ingenuity.

It is an old lawyer instructing a young one :—

“ But chiefly thou, dear Job, my friend,
 My kinsman, to my verse attend ;
 By education formed to shine
 Conspicuous in the pleading line ;
 For you, from five years old to twenty
 Were crammed with Latin words in plenty ;
 Were bound apprentice to the Muses,
 And forced with hard words, blows, and bruises
 To labour on poetic ground,
 Dactyls and spondees to confound
 And when become in fictions wise,
 In Pagan histories and lies,
 Were sent to dive at Granta's cells
 For truth in dialectic wells ;
 There duly bound for four years more
 To ply the philosophic oar,
 Points metaphysical to moot,
 Chop logic, wrangle, and dispute ;
 And now, by far the most ambitious
 Of all the sons of Bergersdiscius,
 Present the law with all the knowledge
 You gathered both at school and college,
 Still bent on adding to your store
 The graces of a Pleader's lore,
 And, better to improve your taste,
 Are by your parents' fondness placed
 Among the blest, the chosen few
 (Blest if their happiness they knew),
 Who, for three hundred guineas paid
 To some great master of the trade,
 Have, at his rooms, by special favour,
 His leave to use their best endeavour,
 By drawing pleas from nine till four,
 To earn him twice three hundred more ;
 And after dinner may repair
 To 'foresaid rooms, and then and there
 Have 'foresaid leave, from five till ten,
 To draw the aforesaid pleas again.”

Then he favours his pupil with a bit of his own history, which seems to me capital :—

“ Whoe'er has drawn a special plea
 Has heard of old Tom Tewksbury ;
 Deaf as a post, and thick as mustard,
 He aimed at wit, and bawled and blustered,
 And died a *Nisi prius* leader—
 That genius was my special pleader.

That great man's office I attended,
 By Hawk and Buzzard recommended ;
 Attorneys both of wondrous skill
 To pluck the goose and drive the quill.
 Three years I sat his smoky room in,
 Pens, paper, pounce and ink consuming ;
 The fourth, when Essoign day begun,
 Joyful I hailed the auspicious sun,
 Bade Tewksbury and clerk adieu ;
 * Purification Eighty-two
 Of both I washed my hands ; and though
 With nothing for my cash to show
 But precedents, so scrawled and blurred
 I scarce could read one single word,
 Nor in my book of common-place
 One feature of the law could trace,
 Save Buzzard's nose and visage thin,
 And Hawk's deficiency of chin,
 Which I, while lolling at my ease,
 Was wont to draw instead of pleas ;
 Yet chambers I equipt complete,
 Hired books, made friends, and gave to eat.
 If, haply, to regale my friends on,
 My mother sent a haunch of ven'son,
 I most respectfully entreated
 The choicest company to eat it ;
 To wit, old Buzzard, Hawk, and Crow,
 Item Tom Thornback, Shark, and Co.,
 Attorneys all, as keen and staunch
 As e'er devoured a client's haunch ;
 Nor did I not their clerks invite
 To taste said vension hashed at night
 For well I knew that hopeful fry
 My rising merit would descry,
 The same litigious course pursue,
 And, when to fish of prey they grew,
 By love of food and contest led,
 Would haunt the spot where once they fed.
 Thus having with due circumspection
 Formed my professional connexion,
 My desk with precedents I strewed,
 Turned critic, danced, or penned an ode,
 Studied the ton, became a free
 And easy man of gallantry ;
 But if, while capering at my glass,
 Or toying with some foyourite lass,
 I heard the aforesaid Hawk a-coming,
 Or Buzzard on the staircase humming,
 At once the fair angelic maid
 Into my coal-hole I conveyed ;

* The Purification of the Virgin Mary is one of the return days of Hilary Term.

At once, with serious look profound,
 And eyes commerced with the ground,
 I seemed as one estranged to sleep,
 And, fixed in cogitation deep,
 Sate motionless; while in my hand I
 Held my Doctrina Placitandi.
 And though I never read a page in 't,
 Thanks to that shrewd well-judging agent,
 My sister's husband, Mr. Shark,
 Soon got six pupils and a clerk.
 Five pupils were my stint, the other
 I took to compliment his mother."

This piece of autobiography seems to me admirable for its neatness and point, its humour and its good-humour. The termination of the poem is a trial of matchless pleasantry between John-a-Gull and John-a-Gudgeon, for an assault at an election. I transcribe the commencement and part of the opening speech—a piece of legal comedy which will make its way even with the least learned reader:—

THE TRIAL.*

JOHN-A-GULL,
 at st. }
 JOHN-A-GUDGEON, } In Trespass.

For the *Plaintiff*, Mr. Counsellor BOTHER'UM.—For the *Defendant*, Mr. Counsellor BORE'UM.—Mr. BOTHER'UM opens the pleadings. His speech at length:—

“ I rise with pleasure, I assure ye,
 With transport to accost a jury
 Of your known conscientious feeling,
 Candour, and honourable dealing,
 From Middlesex † discreetly chosen
 (A worthy and an upright dozen),
 This action, gentlemen, is brought,
 By John-a-Gudgeon for a tort—”

[*Aside.*]

Our French will serve us for this legal word, which is, I suppose, old Norman-French, pronounced English-wise, but signifying a wrong, as one might guess from the modern tongue:—

“ By John-a-Gudgeon for a tort;
 The pleadings state ‘that John-a-Gull,
 With envy wrath and malice full,

* As taken by an eminent short-hand writer.

† Middlesex. This being an election affray, the venue is supposed to have been changed upon the usual affidavit, for the sake of a more fair and impartial trial before a Middlesex jury.

With swords, knives, sticks, staves, fist and bludgeon,
Beat, bruised, and wounded John-a-Gudgeon.'"

This prodigious accumulation of weapons, as well as the "twelve pots, twelve mugs," and so forth, to which we are coming, is an imitation of the real law fictions and endless repetitions which result from the circumstance of nothing being allowed to be proven at a trial that has not been named in the indictment, whereas there is no rule to compel the proof of more than the counsel think essential to the case; it is, therefore, really usual to provide against all contingencies by enumerating far more particulars than are likely to be brought forward. Lawyers will best feel the satire, but all can enjoy the fun:—

"First count's for that with divers jugs,
To wit, twelve pots, twelve cups, twelve mugs,
Of certain vulgar drink, called toddy,
Said Gull did sluice said Gudgeon's body.
The second count's for other toddy,
Thrown by said Gull on Gudgeon's body;
To wit, his gold-laced hat and hair on,
And clothes which he had then and there on;
To wit, twelve jackets, twelve surtouts,
Twelve pantaloons, twelve pair of boots,
Which did thereby much discompose
Said Gudgeon's mouth, eyes, ears, and nose,
Back, stomach, neck, thighs, feet, and toes;
By which and other wrongs unheard of,
His clothes were spoilt and life despaired of:
To all these counts the plea I find
Is son assault and issue's joined."

Here our French helps us again, and the common expression of joining issue. Now for Counsellor Bother'um's history of the battle. The watery names are very happy:—

"Such, gentlemen, is word for word
The story told on this record.
The fray was at a feast or revel,
At Toadland, on the Bedford Level,
Given, as was usual at elections,
By Gudgeon to his Fen connections.
They'd had a meeting at the 'Swan'
The day before the poll began,
And hence adjourned it to make merry
With Mr. Coot, who keeps the 'Ferry.'
Now John-a-Gull, who thrusts his nose
Wherever John-a-Gudgeon goes,
To this same feast, without suspicion,
Unasked, it seems, had gained admission.

Coot had just finished an oration,
And Gudgeon, with much approbation,
Was singing an election ballad,
Penned by the ingenious Doctor Mallard,
(That orthodox and learned writer,
Who bids so fairly for a mitre,)
When Gull, who heard this song or sonnet,
With Mr. Gudgeon's comments on it ;
This Gull, whose very name denoted
The character for whom he voted,
Flourished his knuckles in derision,
And, with much promptness of decision,
Began to pummel and belabour
The short ribs of his peaceful neighbour ;
But first with tweaks assailed his nose,
And interspersed said tweaks with blows.
Gudgeon explained, and Gull recourse had
To other tweaks like tweak aforesaid.
Heaven knows a milder gentler creature
Never was seen in human nature
Than the forbearing and well-judging,
Discreet and gentle John-a-Gudgeon !
And, gentlemen, there 's no man's face is
Better received at all your races,
Wells, mouths and water-drinking places ;
Was alderman and mayor elect,
Once had the honour to be pricked
For sheriff, which important station
He gained without solicitation.
No doubt his lordship recognises
The coat he had on at assizes,
A velveret, genteel and neat,
With tabby lined and frogs complete,
Made for Squire Gudgeon's wedding ball,
When first he came to Webfoot Hall,
An ancient seat in the Isle of Ely,
Where all the Gudgeons lived genteelly ;
Which coat, so trimmed, so frogged, said Gull
Did spoil, besmear, and disannul
With the most villainous libations
Of the most vile of vile potations ;
For proof we 'll call Gull's worthy friend,
Who keeps a school at Toadland's end ;
One Simon Trout, a pious pastor,
And Dr. Tench, who spread the plaster ;
And Farmer Chubb, an honest yeoman,
Who speaks the truth and cares for no man
But, above all, to prove our case,
We 'll show you Mr. Gudgeon's face.
Where every injured feature pleads
'Gainst John-a-Gull's atrocious deeds ;
What facts, what species of excuse,
My brother Bore'um will produce,

What case he'll make, and how maintain
 His plea of son assault demesne,
 Wise as he looks, you may rely on't,
 He knows no more than his own client.
 'T is for you, gentlemen, to say
 What damage John-a-Gull shall pay ;
 'T is in your wisdom, gentlemen, to pull
 So wide the purse-strings of this factious Gull,
 That he no more may triumph and parade
 The streets of Cambridge in a blue cockade," &c. &c.

Here follows a grand and solemn peroration, such as may often be heard in a court of justice, and read in the "Times."

Then comes a most graphic and dramatic examination of witnesses. Simon Trout, dissenting minister and schoolmaster, is examined by Mr. Bother'um, and cross-examined by Mr. Bore'um. At first Mr. Trout *will* speak according to hearsay, what Chubb told him, and Tench ; there is no keeping him to what he himself heard and saw, and Bother'um and Bore'um wrangle over him accordingly. At last, in the middle of much rambling, he swears point blank to the assault committed by Gull, and then Bother'um, feeling him to be a dangerous witness, says—

Both. Come, Sir, we won't detain you. Gull,
 You're sure, smote Gudgeon on the skull ?
Trout. He did.
Bore. Stay, Mr. What-dy'e-call'em,
 You say you saw Gull bruise and maul him ?
Trout. Yes.
Bore. And you never go to dinners
 To feast with publicans and sinners !
 What ! was the bludgeon pretty thick ?
Trout. I cannot say I saw the stick.
Bore. Stay, Sir, I think that you're a teacher !

and so forth ; and, in a dexterous cross-examination, he extorts the admission that there has been some provocation, and that it merged into a regular fight. Then we have the medical witness, Dr. Tench, surgeon and apothecary, admirably technical, translating the commonest word into Latin :—

" The fauces is in a sad condition,
 Between the nares no partition ;"

(the results of the two tweaks ;)

" But both so joined into conjunction,
 The olfactories declined their function ;

Some teeth were broke, and some were lost,
 The incisores suffered most ;
 Much mischief done to the molares—
 And what a very strange affair is,
 Not the least symptom could I see
 Of dentes sapientiae."

The Doctor is dismissed, and Farmer Chubb appears, at first a stolid stupid witness, from whom it is difficult to extort a word, and who has a mind to break away :—

" My lord, I wishes to be going,
 For 'tis a charming time for sowing."

(Lent assizes, I presume !)

Both. Stay, Mr. Chubb ; speak out, Sir, do !
 Did Gull beat Gudgeon ? Is that true ?

Chubb. Beat him ! He beat him black and blue.
 I never see'd a prettier fight,
 So full of malice like, and spite.

Bore. A fight ! Ho ! ho ! the truth's come out,
 A fair set-to—a boxing bout ?

Both. And this you positively swear.

Chubb. Ay, sure ; why Simon Trout was there.

And then it appears that the schoolmaster had done all he could to promote the fray, and had endeavoured to persuade Chubb to act as bottle-holder to one of the parties. Chubb is dismissed, and Bore'um makes a most characteristic defence —cites half-a-dozen books—upon which Bother'um cites somewhere about a score ; they hurl argument against argument, case against case, and get into a prodigious fury. Bore'um

vows—

" If all that I've advanced this day
 Be not good law, my lord, and sound
 As e'er was broached on legal ground,
 Soon as to chambers I return
 All my black-letter books I'll burn."—
 " Hold, hold " (quoth Bother'um), "'t would be cruel
 To turn your fixtures into fuel,
 Those precious tomes with cobwebs spread,
 Which sleep so peaceful o'er your head ;
 Ere yet sentence is decreed 'em,
 Do read 'em, Master Bore'um, read 'em ! "

After which piece of malice both parties suddenly cool down :—

" Both lovingly agreed at once to draw
 A special case, and save the point in law,
 That so the battle, neither lost or won,
 Continued ended, and again begun,
 Might still survive, and other suits succeed

For future heroes of the gown to lead,
And future bards in loftier verse to plead."

Although I am copying from the sixth edition, this pleasant poem is now so scarce, that, after a long search in London, I fairly gave up all hopes of succeeding, and only obtained the volume at Bath, the birth-place of the author, who was the son of Christopher Anstey, the well-known writer of the Bath Guide.

The law of this book is said to be excellent. It is recorded of I know not what great legal luminary, that the only poem he ever read in the course of his life was "The Pleader's Guide," and that he had the triumph and satisfaction of discovering a flaw therein.

VI.

AMERICAN POETS.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THE representatives of the Anglo-Saxon race across the Atlantic—our cousins I do not know how many degrees removed—have in no way better proved their kindred than by the growing pith and substance of their literature. Of such prose writers as Channing, Norton, Prescott, Ware, Cooper, and Washington Irving, together with the many who, where there are such leaders, are sure to press close upon their footsteps, any country might be proud. But one want they had ; and although not particularly fond of pleading guilty to deficiencies of any sort, they confessed it themselves : the want of a great poet. Of elegant versifiers there was no lack. I doubt if, for the fifty years that preceded the French Revolution, England herself had been better off in the way of smooth and polished rhyme. But they are an ambitious race these transatlantic kinsmen of ours, commonly called Americans ; they like to have the best that can be obtained in every department, and they do not dislike to vaunt of their possessions ; and now that their great literary want is supplied in the person of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, they may glorify themselves to their heart's content, certain that every lover

of poetry, whether born under the red-cross banner of Queen Victoria, or the stripes and stars of the States, will join the general All Hail !

I do not know a more enviable reputation than Professor Longfellow has won for himself in this country—won too with a rapidity seldom experienced by our own native poets. The terseness of diction and force of thought delight the old ; the grace and melody enchant the young ; the unaffected and all-pervading piety satisfies the serious ; and a certain slight touch of mysticism carries the imaginative reader fairly off his feet. For my own part, I confess, not only to the being captivated by all these qualities (mysticism excepted), but to the farther fact of yielding to the charm of certain lines, I cannot very well tell why, and walking about the house repeating to myself such figments as this :—

“ I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars,”

as if I were still eighteen. I am not sure that this is not as great a proof of the power of the poet as can be given.

In speaking of Professor Longfellow’s popularity in England, I refer chiefly to the smaller pieces, which form, however, the larger portion of his collected works. The “ Spanish Student,” although beautifully written, is too little dramatic, and, above all, too Spanish for our national taste ; and “ Evangeline,” with its experiments in English versification, and its strange union of a semi-ideal passion with the most real and positive of all Dutch painting, must be regarded as still upon its trial.

The shorter poems are enough. I would fain have enriched my pages with the “ Excelsior” and the “ Psalm of Life,” but they have been long enough printed to have found their way to many hearths and hearts. I prefer, therefore, quoting from the later volumes, which have only recently become known in England, although I could not resist the temptation of inserting the noble tribute to the painter and the bard, which makes the glory of the stirring lyric on Nuremberg :—

NUREMBERG.

In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across broad meadow-lands
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg the ancient stands.
Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and song,
Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round them
throng ;

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors, rough and bold,
Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying, centuries old ;
And thy brave and thrifty burghers boasted, in their uncouth rhyme,
That their great imperial city stretched its hand through every clime.

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with many an iron band,
Stands the mighty linden, planted by Queen Cunigunda's hand :
On the square the oriel window, where in old heroic days
Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maximilian's praise.
Everywhere I see around me rise the wondrous world of art—
Fountains wrought with richest sculpture standing in the common
mart

And above cathedral doorways, saints and bishops carved in stone,
By a former age commissioned as apostles to our own.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust,
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age to age their trust ;
In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare,
Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising through the painted air.
Here, when art was still religion, with a simple reverent heart,
Lived and laboured Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist of Art.

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with busy hand,
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies ;
Dead he is not—but departed—for the artist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair
That he once has trod its pavement, that he once has breathed its air !
Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and dismal
lanes

Walked of yore the Master-Singers, chanting rude poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs came they to the friendly guild,
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime ;
Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom. [bloom
Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laureate of the gentle craft,
Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters, in huge folios sung and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a nicely-sanded floor,
And a garland in the window, and his face above the door ;

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam Puschman's song, [long.
As the old man, grey and dove-like, with his great beard white and
And at night the swart mechanic comes to drown his care and care,
Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the master's antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendour, and before my dreamy eye
Wave these mingling shapes and figures, like a faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for thee the world's regard,
But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans Sachs thy cobbler-bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a region far away [lay;
 As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang in thought his careless
 Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a floweret of the soil,
 The nobility of labour, the long pedigree of toil.

THE OPEN WINDOW.

The old house by the lindens
 Stood silent in the shade,
 And on the gravelled pathway
 The light and shadow played.

I saw the nursery window
 Wide open to the air;
 But the faces of the children
 They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house-dog
 Was standing by the door;
 He looked for his little playmates
 Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,
 They played not in the hall;
 But shadow and silence and sadness
 Were hanging over all.

The birds sang in the branches
 With sweet familiar tone;
 But the voices of the children
 Will be heard in dreams alone!

And the boy that walked beside me
 He could not understand
 Why closer in mine,—ah, closer!—
 I pressed his warm, soft hand!

The charming touch in the last stanza has a pathos peculiar to Professor Longfellow. The next poem is also one which, if printed anonymously, we should, I think, be ready to assign to the right author.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

L'éternité est une pendule, dont le balancier dit et redit sans cesse ces deux mots seulement, dans le silence des tombeaux : Toujours—jamais ! Jamais—toujours !—JACQUES BRIDAINE.

Somewhat back from the village street
 Stands the old-fashioned country seat.
 Across its antique portico
 Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw
 And from its station in the hall
 An ancient time-piece says to all :
 “ Forever—never !
 Never—forever.”

Half way up the stairs it stands,
 And points and beckons with its hands
 From its case of massive oak,
 Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
 Crosses himself, and sighs, alas !
 With sorrowful voice to all who pass :

“ Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! ”

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
 Through days of death and days of birth,
 Through every swift vicissitude
 Of changeful time, unchanged it stood,
 As if, like God, it all things saw,
 It calmly repeats those words of awe :

“ Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! ”

In that mansion used to be
 Free-hearted Hospitality ;
 His great fires up the chimney roared ;
 The stranger feasted at his board ;
 But, like the skeleton at the feast,
 That warning time-piece never ceased :

“ Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! ”

There groups of merry children played ;
 There youths and maidens, dreaming, strayed ;
 O precious hours ! O golden prime
 And affluence of love and time !
 Even as a miser counts his gold
 Those hours the ancient time-piece told :

“ Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! ”

From that chamber, clothed in white,
 The bride came forth on her wedding-night !
 There, in that silent room below,
 The dead lay in his shroud of snow !
 And in the hush that followed the prayer,
 Was heard the old clock on the stair :

“ Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! ”

All are scattered now and fled,
 Some are married, some are dead ;
 And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
 Ah ! when shall they all meet again
 As in the days long since gone by ?
 The ancient time-piece makes reply :

“ Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! ”

Never, here, forever there,
 Where all parting, pain and care,

And death and time shall disappear !
 Forever there, but never here !
 The horologe of Eternity
 Sayeth this incessantly :
 " Forever—never !
 Never—forever ! "

TWILIGHT.

The twilight is sad and cloudy,
 The wind blows wild and free,
 And, like the wings of sea-birds,
 Flash the wild caps of the sea.
 But in the fisherman's cottage
 There shines a ruddier light,
 And a little face at the window
 Peers out into the night.
 Close, close it is pressed to the window,
 As if those childish eyes
 Were looking into the darkness,
 To see some form arise.
 And a woman's waving shadow
 Is passing to and fro,
 Now rising to the ceiling,
 Now bowing and bending low.
 What tale do the roaring ocean,
 And the night-wind bleak and wild,
 As they beat at the crazy casement,
 Tell to that little child ?
 And why do the roaring ocean,
 And the night-wind wild and bleak,
 As they beat at the heart of the mother,
 Drive the colour from her cheek ?

RESIGNATION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
 But one dead lamb is there !
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
 But has one vacant chair !
 The air is full of farewells to the dying
 And mournings for the dead ;
 The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
 Will not be comforted !
 Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions
 Not from the ground arise,
 But oftentimes celestial benedictions
 Assume this dark disguise.
 We see but dimly through the mists and vapours
 Amid these earthly damps,
 What seem to us but sad funereal tapers,
 May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death ! What seems so is transition ;
 This life of mortal breath
 Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
 Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead, the child of our affection,
 But gone unto that school
 Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
 And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion
 By guardian angels led,
 Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
 She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day, we think what she is doing
 In those bright realms of air ;
 Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
 Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
 The bond which Nature gives,
 Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
 May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her,
 For when, with raptures wild,
 In our embraces we again enfold her,
 She will not be a child ;

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
 Clothed with celestial grace ;
 And beautiful, with all the soul's expansion,
 Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
 And anguish long suppressed,
 The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
 That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient and assuage the feeling
 We may not wholly stay ;
 By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
 The grief that must have way.

I add one simile from the "Address to a Child :"

By what astrology of fear or hope
 Dare I to cast thy horoscope !
 Like the new moon thy life appears
 A little strip of silver-light,
 And, widening outward into night,
 The shadowy disk of future years !
 And yet, upon its outer rim,
 A luminous circle faint and dim,
 And scarcely visible to us here,
 Rounds and completes the perfect sphere.

A prophecy and intimation,
 A pale and feeble adumbration,
 Of the great world of light that lies
 Beyond all human destinies !

The concluding extract has a stronger recommendation than any other that I can give ; it is Mrs. Browning's favourite among the poems of Longfellow :

THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

I shot an arrow into the air,
 It fell to earth I knew not where ;
 For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
 Could not follow in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
 It fell to earth I knew not where ;
 For who has sight so keen and strong,
 That it can follow the flight of song ?

Long, long afterwards, in an oak
 I found the arrow still unbroke ;
 And the song, from beginning to end,
 I found again in the heart of a friend.

I venture to add an anecdote new to the English public.

Professor Longfellow's residence at Cambridge, a picturesque old wooden house, has belonging to it the proudest historical associations of which America can boast : it was the headquarters of Washington. One night the poet chanced to look out of his window, and saw by the vague starlight a figure riding slowly past the mansion. The face could not be distinguished ; but the tall erect person, the cocked hat, the traditional costume, the often-described white horse, all were present. Slowly he paced before the house and then returned, and then again passed by, after which neither horse nor rider were seen or heard of.

Could it really be Washington ? or was it some frolic-masquerader assuming his honoured form ? For my part I hold firmly to the ghostly side of the story ; so did my informant, also a poet and an American, and as worthy to behold the spectre of the illustrious warrior as Professor Longfellow himself. I can hardly say more.

VII.

AUTHORS SPRUNG FROM THE PEOPLE.

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

I REMEMBER saying one day to a woman of high genius that a mutual friend of hers and mine proposed to give a series of lectures on authors sprung from the people, from the masses as it is the fashion to say now-a-days, and her replying quickly: “Why all authors who are worth reading are sprung from the people;—it is the well-born who are the exceptions.” And then she ran through a bead-roll of great names from Chaucer to Burns: nevertheless, this repartee was not quite accurate; not a whit more accurate than a repartee usually is; for the number of educated writers must always preponderate. But still the class of self-educated writers is large, increasingly large; and truthful biographies of such persons must always be amongst the most interesting books in the world, as showing better than any other books the development and growth of individual minds.

Mr. Bamford’s “Life of a Radical,” and Mr. Somerville’s account of his own career, have much of this merit; but the most curious of all these memoirs, both for the vicissitudes of the story and the indomitable character of the man, is the “Life of Thomas Holcroft,” begun by himself and concluded by Hazlitt.

Of his strength of character no better evidence can be offered than that the first seventeen chapters were dictated by him during his last illness, whilst he was in such a state that he was frequently obliged to pause several minutes between every word, and yet the events are as clearly narrated, and the style is as lucid and as lively, as if it had been written in his most vigorous day.

He was born in London in the winter of 1745; his father being by trade a shoemaker, but of a disposition so unsteady that he never could remain long in any place or at any occupation. Here is the account his son, a most dutiful and affectionate son, who maintained him to his death, gives of these rambling propensities:—

“Having been bred to an employment for which he was

very ill fitted, the habit that became most rooted and most fatal to my father was a fickleness of disposition, a thorough persuasion after he had tried one means of providing for himself and his family for a certain time, that he had discovered another far more profitable and secure. Steadiness of pursuit was a virtue at which he never could arrive ; and I believe few men in the kingdom had in the course of their lives been the hucksters of so many small wares, or more enterprising dealers in articles of a halfpenny value.

“ I should mention that to carry on these itinerant trades my father had begun with purchasing an ass, and bought more as he could ; now and then increasing his store by the addition of a ragged pony or worn-out weather-beaten Rosinante. In autumn he turned his attention to fruit, and conveyed apples and pears in hampers from villages to market towns. The bad nourishment I met with, the cold and wretched manner in which I was clothed, and the excessive weariness I endured in following these animals day after day, and being obliged to drive creatures perhaps still more weary than myself, were miseries much too great, and loaded my little heart with sorrows far too poignant ever to be forgotten. By-roads and high-roads were alike to be traversed, but the former far the oftenest, for they were then almost innumerable, and the state of them in winter would hardly be believed at present.

“ My father became by turns a collector and vendor of rags, a hardware-man, a dealer in buttons, buckles, and pewter spoons—in short, a trafficker in whatever could bring gain. But there was one thing which fixed his attention longer than any other, and which, therefore, I suppose he found the most lucrative, which was to fetch pottery from the neighbourhood of Stoke in Staffordshire, and to hawk it all through the north of England. Of all other travelling this was the most continual, the most severe, and the most intolerable. * * *

“ Towards Litchfield on the right, lay Cannock heath and town, and adjoining to this heath on the left there were coal-pits situated in a remarkably heavy clay country. Desirous of employing his asses, yet averse to go himself, my father frequently sent me to these coal-pits to get a single ass loaded, and to drive him over the heath to Rugeley, there to find a customer for my coals. The article was so cheap and so near

that the profits could be but very small, yet they were something. Had the weather been fine when I was sent on these errands, the task would not have been so difficult, nor the wonder so great; but at the time I was unfortunately sent there I have a perfect recollection of deep ruts, of cattle, both asses and horses, unable to drag their legs through the clay, and of carts and waggons that were set fast in it.

“One day my ass had passed safely through the clay-ruts and deep roads, and under my guidance had begun to ascend a hill we had to cross on Cannock heath on our way to Rugeley. The wind was very high, though while we were on low ground I had never suspected its real force. But my apprehensions began to increase with our ascent, and when on the summit of the hill, nearly opposite to two clumps of trees which are pictured to my imagination as they stood there at that time, it blew gust after gust too powerful for the loaded animal to resist, and down it came. Through life I have always had a strong sense of the grief and utter despair I then felt. But what a little surprises me is that I have no recollection whatever of the means by which I found relief, but rather of the naked and desolate place in which I was, and my inability to help myself. Could I have unloaded the ass, it would not have been much matter; but the coals were brought from the pits in such masses that three of them were generally an ass-load, any one of which was usually beyond my strength. I have no doubt, however, but I got them by some means or other to Rugeley, and brought the money for them to my father, whom I could not help secretly accusing of insensibility, though that was the very reverse of his character.

“The coal-pits were situated on the extremity of an old forest inhabited by large quantities of red deer. At these I always stopped to look; but what inspired and delighted me most was the noble stag, for to him the deer appeared insignificant. Him I often saw bounding along, eyeing objects without fear, and making prodigious leaps over obstacles that opposed his passage. In this free state, indeed, he cannot but excite our admiration.

“One little anecdote I must not omit. The reader will naturally suppose that from the time I began to travel the country with my father and mother I had little leisure or

opportunity to acquire any knowledge by reading. I was too much pressed by fatigue, hunger, cold, and nakedness. Still, however, I cannot but suppose, as well from my own propensity to obey the will of God as from my father's wish to encourage my inclinations of this kind, that I continued to repeat my prayers and catechism morning and evening, and on Sundays to read the Prayer-book and Bible. At all events, I had not forgotten to read: for while we were at the house near Rugeley, by some means or other the song of 'Chevy Chase' came into my possession, which I read over with great delight at our fireside. My father, who knew that my memory was tolerably retentive, and saw the great number of stanzas the ballad contained, said to me, 'Well, Tom, can you get that song by heart?' To this question I very readily answered, 'Yes.' 'In how long a time?' 'Why, father, you know I have got such and such work for to-morrow, and what you will set me for the following days I can't tell; however, I can get it in three days.' 'What, perfectly?' 'Yes.' 'Well, if you do that, I'll give you a halfpenny.' Rejoiced at my father's generosity, 'Oh, then, never fear,' said I. I scarcely need add that my task was easily accomplished, and that I then had the valuable sum of a halfpenny at my own disposal."

This way of life lasted until he was nine or ten years old; then came a spell of shoemaking, and a violent attack of asthma, aggravated by the stooping position, which continued a year or two longer. The disease was at length removed by the skill of a country apothecary, and a fresh impulse was given to the poor boy's aspirations by the sight of a strongly-contested horse-race at Nottingham. His longings to be allowed to minister in some way to that noble animal became irrepressible; he confided them to his father, and was fortunate enough to be received into the service of a respectable man who kept a training stable near Newmarket. There being placed on a horse too spirited for his youth, his feebleness, and his inexperience, he got a terrible fall, and, what he grieved far more, a dismissal. He was received by another trainer, and dismissed again. At last he made a third application:—

"It was no difficult matter to meet with John Watson: he was so attentive to stable hours, that, except on extraordinary

occasions, he was always to be found. Being first careful to make myself look as like a stable-boy as I could, I came at the hour of four, and ventured to ask if I could see John Watson. The immediate answer was in the affirmative. John Watson came, looked at me with a serious but good-natured countenance, and accosted me first with, 'Well, my lad, what is your business ? I suppose I can guess ; you want a place ?' 'Yes, Sir.' 'Who have you lived with ?' 'Mr. Woodcock, on the forest. One of your boys, Jack Clarke, brought me with him from Nottingham.' 'How came you to leave Mr. Woodcock ?' 'I had a sad fall from an iron-grey filly, that almost killed me.' 'That is bad indeed. And so you left him ?' 'He turned me away, Sir.' 'That is honest. I like your speaking the truth. So you are come from him to me ?' At this question, I cast my eyes down and hesitated ; then fearfully answered, 'No, Sir.' 'No ! What, change masters twice in so short a time ?' 'I can't help it, Sir, if I am turned away.' This last answer made him smile."

So his character proving satisfactory, he is hired.

"My station was immediately assigned me. There was a remarkably quiet three years old colt lately from the discipline of the breaker, and of him I was ordered to take charge, instructed by one of the upper boys in everything that was to be done, and directed to back him and keep pace with the rest when they went out to exercise, only taking care to keep a straight line, and to walk, canter, and gallop the last. * * * * I did not long ride a quiet colt at the tail of the string (on whose back John Watson soon put a new comer), but had a dun horse, by no means a tame or safe one, committed to my care. I contrived to ride the dun horse through the winter. It was John Watson's general practice to exercise his horses over the flat, and up Cambridge Hill, on the west side of Newmarket ; but the rule was not invariable. One wintry day he ordered us up to the Bury hills. It mizzled a very sharp sleet, the wind became uncommonly cutting, and Dun, the horse I rode, being remarkable for a tender skin, found the wind and the sleet, which blew directly up his nostrils, so very painful, that it suddenly made him outrageous. He started from the rank in which he was walking, tried to unseat me, endeavoured to set off full speed, and when he found he could not master me so as to get head,

began to rear, snorted most violently, threw out behind, plunged, and used every mischievous exertion of which the muscular powers of a blood-horse are susceptible. I, who felt the uneasiness he suffered before his violence began, being luckily prepared, sat him as steady and upright as if this had been his usual exercise. John Watson was riding beside his horses, and a groom (I believe it was old Cheevers) broke out into an exclamation—‘I say, John, that is a fine lad !’ ‘Ay, ay,’ replied Watson, highly satisfied, ‘you will find some time or other that there are few in Newmarket that will match him.’ To have behaved with true courage, and to meet with applause like this, especially from John Watson, was a triumph such as I could at this time have felt in no other way with the same sweet satisfaction. My horsemanship had been seen by all the boys, my praises had been heard by them all ! * * * *

“Horses, generally speaking, are of a generous and kindly nature. Of their friendly disposition towards their keepers, there is a trait known to every boy that has the care of one of them, which ought not to be omitted. The custom is to rise very early, even between two and three in the morning, when the days lengthen. In the course of the day, horses and boys have much to do. About half-past eight, perhaps, in the evening, the horse has his last feed of oats, which he generally stands to enjoy in the centre of his smooth, carefully-made bed of clean, long straw, and by the side of him the weary boy will often lie down, it being held as a maxim, a rule without exception, that were he to lie even till morning, the horse would never lie down himself, but stand still, careful to do his keeper no harm. * * * *

“Except by accident, the race-horse never trots. He must either walk or gallop ; and in exercise, even when it is the hardest, the gallop begins slowly and gradually, and increases till the horse is nearly at full speed. When he has galloped half a mile, the boy begins to push him forward without relaxation for another half mile. This is at the period when the horses are in full exercise, to which they come by degrees. The boy that can best regulate these degrees among those of light weight is generally chosen to lead the gallop ; that is, he goes first out of the stable, and first returns.

“In the time of long exercise, this is the first *brushing*

gallop. A brushing gallop signifies that the horses are nearly at full speed before it is over, and it is commonly made at last rather up hill. Having all pulled up, the horses stand some two or three minutes, and recover their wind ; they then leisurely descend the hill, and take a long walk ; after which they are brought to water. But in this, as in everything else (at least as soon as long exercise begins), everything to them is measured. The boy counts the number of times the horse swallows when he drinks, and allows him to take no more gulps than the groom orders,—the fewest to the hardest exercise, and one horse more or less than another, according to the judgment of the groom. After watering, a gentle gallop is taken, and after that another walk of considerable length ; to which succeeds the second and last brushing gallop, which is by far the most severe. When it is over, another pause, thoroughly to recover their wind, is allowed them ; then a long walk is begun, the limits of which are prescribed, and it ends in directing their ride homeward.

“ The morning’s exercise often extends to four hours, and the evening’s to much about the same time. * * * *

“ In every stud of horses there are frequent changes ; and as their qualities are discovered, one horse is rejected and sold, or perhaps a stranger bought and admitted. It happened on such an occasion that a little horse was brought us from another stud, whence he had been rejected for being unmanageable. He had shown himself restive, and, besides the snaffle, was ridden in a check-rein. I was immediately placed on his back, and what seemed rather more extraordinary, ordered to lead the gallop as usual. I do not know how it happened, but under me he showed very little disposition to become refractory ; and whenever the humour occurred, it was soon overcome. That he was, however, watchful for an opportunity to do mischief, the following incident will discover. Our time for hard exercise had begun perhaps a fortnight or three weeks. As that proceeds, the boys are less cautious, each having less suspicion of his horse. I was leading the gallop one morning, and had gone more than half the way towards the foot of Cambridge Hill, when something induced me to call and speak to a boy behind me ; for which purpose I rather unseated myself, and, as I looked back, rested on my left thigh. The arch-traitor no sooner felt the pre-

carious seat I had taken, then he suddenly plunged from the path, had his head between his legs, his heels in the air, and exerting all his power of bodily contortion, flung me from the saddle, with only one foot in the stirrup, and both my legs on the off side. I immediately heard the whole set of boys behind shouting triumphantly, 'A calf, a calf!' a phrase of contempt for a boy that is thrown. Though the horse was then in the midst of his wild antics, and increasing his pace to full speed, as far as the tricks he was playing would permit, still, finding I had a foot in the stirrup, I replied to their shouts by a whisper to myself, 'It is no calf yet.' The horse took his usual course, turned up Cambridge Hill, and now rather increased his speed than his mischievous tricks. This opportunity I took, with that rashness of spirit which is peculiar to boys, and, notwithstanding the prodigious speed and irregular motion of the horse, threw my left leg over the saddle. It was with the utmost difficulty that I could preserve my balance; but I did, though by this effort I lost hold of the reins, both my feet were out of the stirrup, and the horse for a moment was entirely his own master. But my grand object was gained—I was once more firmly seated, the reins and stirrups were recovered. In a twinkling the horse, instead of being pulled up, was urged to his utmost speed; and when he came to the end of the gallop, he stopped of himself with a very good will, as he was heartily breathed. The short exclamations of the boys, at having witnessed what they thought an impossibility, were the gratifications I received, and the greatest, perhaps, that could be bestowed.

"I once saw an instance of what may be called the grandeur of alarm in a horse. In winter, during short exercise, I was returning one evening on the back of a hunter that was put in training for the Hunter's Plate. There had been some little rain, and the channel, always dry in summer, was then a small brook. As I must have rubbed his legs dry, if wetted, I gave him the rein and made him leap the brook, which he understood as a challenge for play; and beginning to gambol, after a few antics, he reared very high, and plunging forward with great force, alighted with his fore-feet on the edge of a deep gravel-pit, half-filled with water, so near that a very few inches farther he must have gone headlong down. His first astonishment and fear were so great, that he stood for some time

breathless and motionless: then gradually recollecting himself, his back became curved, his ears erect, his hind and fore legs in a position for sudden retreat; his nostrils, from an inward snort, burst into one loud expression of horror, and rearing on his hind legs, he turned short round, expressing all the terrors he had felt by the utmost violence of plunging, kicking, and other bodily exertions. I was not quite so much frightened as he had been, but I was heartily glad, when he became quiet again, that the accident had been no worse. The only little misfortune I had was the loss of my cap, and being obliged to ride back some way, in order to recover it."

By this time young Holcroft was sixteen, and had begun to feel a craving for knowledge of a different nature from any that he could obtain at Newmarket; although even there he had contrived to read every book that came in his way, to perfect himself in arithmetic, and to acquire a scientific knowledge of vocal music, which was of great use to him in his after career. He had made this progress, too, chiefly from his own efforts; so that the great process of self-instruction which distinguished him through life was now begun, and he already knew enough to feel an ardent desire to know more. London, where his father was now living as a cobbler, offered at least the hope of education; accordingly, to the great amazement and regret of good John Watson, who had been uniformly kind to him, and to whom he could hardly summon courage to announce his determination, he abandoned the field in which his success had been so encouraging, took leave of his companions, biped and quadruped, and made his way to the great city.

Here a long series of disappointments awaited him. He became, indeed, a skilful and rapid worker at the shoemaking trade; but the position and confinement disagreed with him (well they might after the free seat on horseback, the exercise, and the pure air of Newmarket), and his habit of *idling his time in reading*, as the phrase goes, prevented his earning more than the bare necessities of his abstemious life. He tried various schemes; taught an evening school; kept a day school somewhere in the country, with such indifferent success that he had but one pupil, and lived upon potatoes and buttermilk for three months; authorship, too, he tried in a small way, creeping into notice in the most obscure newspapers and the

smallest magazines ; and at about the age of twenty, when barely able to support himself, he married. It is to be noted that throughout his whole life he was eminently a marrying man, having married three wives, and left a young widow, the daughter of Monsieur Mercier, author of the “Tableau de Paris.” Shortly after his first marriage, of which we hear but little, although he was eminently kind and indulgent in his domestic character, he seems to have been induced, by his success in a spouting club, to try his fortune on the stage. He has left a characteristic account of his application to Foote :—

“ He had the good fortune to find the manager at breakfast with a young man, whom he employed partly on the stage, and partly as an amanuensis. ‘ Well,’ said he, ‘ young gentleman, I guess your business by the sheepishness of your manner ; you have got the theatrical *cacoethes* ; you have rubbed your shoulder against the scene : nay, is it not so ? ’ Holcroft answered that it was. ‘ Well, and what great hero should you wish to personate ? Hamlet, or Richard, or Othello, or who ? ’ Holcroft replied that he distrusted his capacity for performing any that he had mentioned. ‘ Indeed ! ’ said he, ‘ that’s a wonderful sign of grace. I have been teased these many years by all the spouters in London, of which honourable fraternity I dare say you are a member ; for I can perceive no stage varnish, none of your true strolling brass licker on your face.’ ‘ No, indeed, Sir.’ ‘ I thought so. Well, Sir, I never saw a spouter before that did not want to surprise the town in *Pierre*, or *Lothario*, or some character that demands all the address and every requisite of a master in the art. But, come, give us a touch of your quality—a speech. There’s a youngster,’ pointing to his secretary, ‘ will roar Jaffier against *Pierre*. Let the loudest take both.’ Accordingly, he held the book, and at it they fell. The scene they chose was that of the before-mentioned characters in ‘ *Venice Preserved*. ’ For a little while after they began, it seems that Holcroft took the hint that Foote had thrown out, and restrained his wrath. But this appeared so insipid, and the ideas of rant and excellence were so strongly connected in his mind, that when Jaffier began to exalt his voice, he could no longer contain himself, but, as *Nick Bottom* says, ‘ they both roared so, that it would have done your heart good to hear them.’ Foote

smiled, and, after enduring this vigorous attack upon his organs of hearing as long as he was able, interrupted them.

“Far from discouraging our new beginner, he told him that, with respect to giving the meaning of the words, he spoke much more correctly than he had expected. ‘But,’ said he, ‘like other novices, you seem to imagine that all excellence lies in the lungs; whereas such violent exertions should be used very sparingly, and upon extraordinary occasions; for if an actor make no reserve of his powers, how is he to rise according to the tone of the passion?’ He then read the scene they had rehearsed, and with so much propriety and ease, as well as force, that Holcroft was surprised, having hitherto supposed the risible faculties to be the only ones over which he had any great power.”

Thomas Holcroft came away from this celebrated wit, delighted with the ease and frankness of his behaviour, and elated with his prospect of success. Unluckily, however, he had already entered into a negotiation with a very different person; and tempted by an offer nominally higher, in point of salary, agreed with Macklin for a small engagement in a theatre in Dublin. The brutal manners of Macklin are well known. Hazlitt says that until the age of forty he could not even read; an assertion which, considering the undoubted merit of his play, “The Man of the World,” appears all but incredible. It is, however, certain that he was coarse, illiterate, and unfeeling; and the manner in which he suffered the Dublin manager to depart from the engagements into which he had entered with poor Holcroft does very little honour to his principles.

For the next seven years our luckless adventurer was tossed about the world as a strolling player, taking all parts, but succeeding best in old men and low comedy, singing in choruses, filling the post of prompter,—always penniless, and sometimes nearly starved. At the end of that time, his prospects improved; some family connexion (it is not said what) threw him upon the powerful protection of the Grevilles and the Crewes, and we find him numbered in the Drury Lane company, and complaining in a letter to Sheridan of walking in processions, and playing the part of a dumb steward in “Love for Love.”

Nevertheless, matters are mending. He takes a house in

London, marries a second wife, becomes a recognised author, and is employed by the London booksellers to write an account of the riots of 1780. Whilst attending the Old Bailey trials for that purpose, he was happy enough to save the life of an innocent man, who had nearly been condemned through the mistake of a witness.

Things go better. He brings out his less-known novels, his least celebrated, but still successful plays ; and becomes one of the best and most voluminous translators upon record. If ever one happens to take up an English version of a French or German book of that period,—“Memoirs of Baron Trenck,” or “Caroline de Litchfield,”—and if that version have in it the zest and savour of original writing, we shall be sure to find the name of Thomas Holcroft in the title-page.

One of his translating feats was remarkable. Beaumarchais' wonderful play of “Figaro” was carrying the world before it in Paris, and would be sure to make the fortune of an English theatre. But the comedy was unpublished, and no copy could be procured from any quarter. Holcroft made up his mind to attend the performance every evening, until he had fixed the whole work in his memory. He took a friend with him, and they wrote down their several recollections on their return, very literally comparing notes. When it is remembered that the “Marriage of Figaro” is the longest play in the French language, the effort of a foreigner bringing the whole away in a week or ten days will appear most extraordinary, for not the slightest memorandum could be made in the theatre. His translation, under the name of “Follies of a Day,” appeared almost immediately at Covent Garden, producing him six hundred pounds from the manager, besides a large sum for the copyright.

This was perhaps the happiest time of Mr. Holcroft's life—this and a few succeeding years. His comedies, “Duplicity,” “The School for Arrogance,” and the “Road to Ruin,” evinced talent (I had well-nigh written genius) of the highest order. The serious parts above all are admirable. Perhaps no scenes have ever drawn so many tears as those between the father and the son in the last-mentioned play. The famous “Good Night” is truly the one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin ; and although I have seen it played as well as anything can be played by Munden and Elliston, I have always

felt that the real merit belonged to the author. His greater novels, too, "Anna St. Ives" and "Hugh Trevor," were full of powerful writing, and he seemed destined to a long course of literary prosperity. A terrible domestic grief came to break the course of this felicity. I transcribe Mr. Hazlitt's narrative :—

" William Holcroft was his only son, and favourite child ; and this very circumstance, perhaps, led to the catastrophe which had nearly proved fatal to his father, as well as to himself. He had been brought up, if anything, with too much care and tenderness : he was a boy of extraordinary capacity, and Mr. Holcroft thought no pains should be spared for his instruction and improvement. From the first, however, he had shown an unsettled disposition ; and his propensity to ramble was such from his childhood, that when he was only four years old, and under the care of an aunt in Nottingham, he wandered away to a place at some distance, where there was a coffee-house, into which he went, and read the newspapers to the company, by whom he was taken care of, and sent home. This propensity was so strong in him that it became habitual, and he had run away six or seven times before the last.

" On Sunday, November 8th, 1789, he brought his father a short poem. A watch, which had been promised to him as a reward, was given to him ; his father conversed with him in the most affectionate manner, praised, encouraged him, and told him that, notwithstanding his former errors and wanderings, he was convinced he would become a good and excellent man. But he observed, when taking him by the hand to express his kindness, that the hand of the youth, instead of returning the pressure as usual, remained cold and insensible. This, however, at the moment, was supposed to be accidental. He seemed unembarrassed, cheerful, and asked leave without any appearance of design or hesitation, to dine with a friend in the city, which was immediately granted. He thanked his father, went down stairs, and several times anxiously inquired whether his father were gone to dress. As soon as he was told that he had left his room, he went up stairs again, broke open a drawer, and took out forty pounds. With this, the watch, a pocket-book, and a pair of pistols of his father's, he hastened away to join one of his acquaintances, who was going

to the West Indies. He was immediately pursued to Gravesend, but ineffectually. It was not discovered till the following Wednesday that he had taken the money. After several days of the most distressing inquietude, there appeared strong presumptive proof that he, with his acquaintance, was on board the 'Fame,' Captain Carr, then lying in the Downs. The father and a friend immediately set off, and travelled post all Sunday night to Deal. Their information proved true, for he was found to be on board the 'Fame,' where he had assumed a false name, though his true situation was known to the Captain. He had spent all his money except fifteen pounds, in paying for his passage, and purchasing what he thought he wanted. He had declared he would shoot any person who came to take him; but that if his father came he would shoot himself. His youth, for he was but sixteen, made the threat appear incredible. The pistols, pocket-book, and remaining money were locked up in safety for him by his acquaintance. But he had another pair of pistols concealed. Mr. Holcroft and his friend went on board, made inquiries, and understood he was there. He had retired into a dark part of the steerage. When he was called and did not answer, a light was sent for; and as he heard the ship's steward, some of the sailors, and his father, approaching, conscious of what he had done, and unable to bear the presence of his father, and the open shame of detection, he suddenly put an end to his existence.

"The shock which Mr. Holcroft received was almost mortal. For three days he could not see his own family, and nothing but the love he bore that family could probably have prevented him from sinking under his affliction. He seldom went out of his house for a whole year afterwards; and the impression was never completely effaced from his mind."

After recovering from this calamity, Mr. Holcroft was surprised by one of a totally different nature, which came in the form of an indictment for high treason. Nothing but the panic into which the minds of men were thrown by the crimes and excesses of the first French Revolution can explain the virulence with which every one who stood suspected of cherishing liberty, or desiring reform, was assailed during that evil day. It was the cruel and unreasoning persecution that is born of fear; and in Mr. Holcroft's case the wrong was more glaring than in that of most others, inasmuch as he was

a purely speculative politician, and his speculations, although sufficiently visionary and Utopian, were anything rather than sanguinary or violent. One of his friends said of him, that he was a sort of natural Quaker. And certainly it would be as wise to prosecute a member of the Peace Society, or a writer on the millennium, as one whose dreams were of the perfectibility of human nature, the extinction of warfare, and the triumph of wisdom and justice upon earth.

He belonged, it is true, to the Society for Constitutional Information, but had moved none of the resolutions, had seldom spoken, and, except for his literary eminence, was one of the least prominent members of the association. Nevertheless, his name, together with those of Hardy, Thelwall, Horne Tooke, and eight others, appeared in the bill presented to the Grand Jury at Hicks's Hall. Mr. Holcroft in some measure retaliated upon the Crown lawyers the surprise they had occasioned him, by unexpectedly presenting himself before Chief-Justice Eyre, and surrendering himself to the Court without waiting for the execution of the warrant. The manliness and firmness of his conduct, accompanied by perfect respectfulness and self-command, obtained for him more civility than was shown to the other parties included in the indictment.

The issue is well known. Thomas Hardy, the first man put into the dock, was acquitted, and the other prisoners were discharged without being brought to trial.

But the effect of this accusation did not terminate in the Court of Justice. The demon of party hatred was evoked. Even such a man as Mr. Windham, high-minded, large-hearted, chivalrous as he was, did not disdain to talk of "acquitted felons;" and, as a dramatic writer, Mr. Holcroft was especially amenable to public opinion. Every fresh play was a fresh battle; and a battle, whatever be the issue, is in itself fatal to a great success; so that, at last, comedies, which had no more to do with politics than "*The Merry Wives of Windsor*," were fain to be brought out under the name of a fictitious author.

It is not many years ago that I and another lover of the drama, an old and valued friend, were disputing as to the writer of "*He's Much to Blame*." Both possessed the play and both were certain as to the name printed in the title-page. Neither were wrong. It was the story of the two knights and

the shield. My friend's copy was the first edition, with the feigned name; mine the seventh, when the ordeal was passed, and the true author restored to his rightful place. May Heaven avert from us the renewal of such prejudice and such injustice!

Wearied out with these conflicts, Mr. Holcroft retired first to Hamburgh, and then to France, where he resided many years, occasionally sending to England translations of popular foreign books. His last original work was one on France, of great merit. Few knew the people better, or could describe them so well. His stories are pleasant and characteristic:—

“ My wife was one day buying some fish; while she was undetermined, the girl said to her, ‘ *Prenez cela, car votre mari est un brave homme?* ’ My wife replied, ‘ *Oui, cela, se peut bien; mais comment savez-vous qu'il est un brave homme?* ’ ‘ *C'est égal,* ’ answered the girl, ‘ *cela fait plaisir à entendre.* ’ This girl's maxim is sound morality wherever I have been in France.”

This is characteristic, too, in the best sense; a charming mixture of goodness and grace.—

“ A poor musician, who usually brought a small pianoforte in the afternoon to the Champs Elysées, and played that those who were pleased might reward him by a trifle, having played in vain one evening, was sorrowfully returning home. He was seen by Elleviou (a famous actor), remarked, and questioned. The poverty and ill success of the wandering musician moved the pity of the actor, who desired the instrument might again be put down; and, stepping aside, he said he would return instantly. His wife and friend had passed on, and he brought them back. It was nearly dark. Pradere, his friend, sat down to the pianoforte, and accompanied Elleviou, who began to sing, to the astonishment of numbers that were soon assembled. The men had drawn the hat over the brow; Madame Elleviou let down her veil, and went round to collect. The pleasingness of her manner, the little thankful curtsies she dropt to all who gave, the whiteness of her hand, and the extraordinary music they heard, rendered the audience so liberal, that she made several *tours*, and none ineffectually. Elleviou, however, could not long remain unknown; and finding themselves discovered, Madame Elleviou gave all, and it was supposed more than all, she had collected from the crowd to the poor musician. The sum amounted to thirty shillings,

and among the pence and halfpence there were crown pieces, which no doubt were given by the actors. The feelings of the man, as the audience dispersed, are not easily to be described. The unexpected relief afforded to him who was departing so disconsolate was great indeed ; but it was forgotten in the charming behaviour of those who relieved him—in their almost divine music, and in the strangeness of the adventure. The surrounding people were scarcely less moved ; so kind an act from a man in such high public estimation excited more than admiration ; and the tears of gratitude shed by the musician drew sympathising drops from many of the spectators."

Mr. Heleroft wrote little verse ; but, had he chosen that medium of thought, would probably have excelled in it. The story of "Gaffer Gray" has in common with many short poems of Southey, written at the same period, the great fault of setting class against class—a fault which generally involves a want of truth ; but it does its work admirably, and produces exactly the effect intended in the fewest possible words :—

[Never]

"Ho ! why dost thou shiver and shake,
 Gaffer Gray,
 And why doth thy nose look so blue ?"
 "Tis the weather that's cold,
 'Tis I'm grown very old,
 And my doublet is not very new,
 Well-a-day ! "

"Then line thy worn doublet with ale,
 Gaffer Gray,
 And warm thy old heart with a glass."
 "Nay, but credit I've none,
 And my money's all gone ;
 Then say how may that come to pass ?
 Well-a-day ! "

"Hie away to the house on the brow,
 Gaffer Gray,
 And knock at the jolly priest's door."
 "The priest often preaches
 Against worldly riches ;
 But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,
 Well-a-day ! "

"The lawyer lives under the hill,
 Gaffer Gray,
 Warmly fenced both in back and in front."

“ He will fasten his locks,
 And will threaten the stocks,
 Should he ever more find me in want,
 Well-a-day ! ”

“ The squire has fat beeves and brown ale,
 Gaffer Gray,
 And the season will welcome you there.”
 “ His fat beeves and his beer,
 And his merry new year,
 Are all for the flush and the fair,
 Well-a-day ! ”

“ My keg is but low, I confess,
 Gaffer Gray :
 What then ? While it lasts, man, we'll live.”
 “ The poor man alone,
 When he hears the poor moan,
 Of his morsel a morsel will give,
 Well-a-day ! ”

This author, so gifted, so various, and so laborious, one of the most remarkable of self-educated men, died in London on the 3rd of March, 1809, after a long and painful illness, at the age of sixty-three ; I fear, poor.

VIII.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

SITTING IN THE LANE.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

THERE are some places that seem formed by nature for doubling and redoubling the delight of reading and dreaming over the greater poets. Living in the country, one falls into the habit of choosing out a fitting nest for that enjoyment, and with Beaumont and Fletcher especially, to whose dramatic fascinations I have the happy knack of abandoning myself, without troubling myself in the least about their dramatic faults (I do not speak here of graver sins, observe, gentle reader). Their works never seem to me half so delightful as when I pore over them in the silence and solitude of a certain green lane, about half a mile from home ; sometimes seated on the roots of an old fantastic beech, sometimes on the

trunk of a felled oak, or sometimes on the ground itself, with my back propped lazily against a rugged elm.

In that very lane am I writing on this sultry June day, luxuriating in the shade, the verdure, the fragrance of hay-field and of bean-field, and the absence of all noise, except the song of birds, and that strange mingling of many sounds, the whir of a thousand forms of insect life, so often heard among the general hush of a summer noon.

Woodcock Lane is so called, not after the migratory bird so dear to sportsman and to epicure, but from the name of a family, who, three centuries ago, owned the old manor-house, a part of which still adjoins it, just as the neighbouring eminence of Beech Hill is called after the ancient family of De la Beche, rather than from the three splendid beech-trees that still crown its summit: and this lane would probably be accounted beautiful by any one who loved the close recesses of English scenery, even though the person in question should happen not to have haunted it these fifty years as I have done.

It is a grassy lane, edging off from the high road, nearly two miles in length, and varying from fifty to a hundred yards in width. The hedgerows on either side are so thickly planted with tall elms as almost to form a verdant wall, for the greater part doubly screened by rows of the same stately tree, the down-dropping branches forming close shady foot-paths on either side, and leaving in the centre a broad level strip of the finest turf, just broken, here and there, by cart-tracks, and crossed by slender rills. The effect of these tall solemn trees, so equal in height, so unbroken, and so continuous, is quite grand and imposing as twilight comes on; especially when some slight bend in the lane gives to the outline almost the look of an amphitheatre.

On the southern side, the fields slope with more or less abruptness to the higher lands above, and winding footpaths and close woody lanes lead up the hill to the breezy common. To the north the fields are generally of pasture land, broken by two or three picturesque farm-houses, with their gable ends, their tall chimneys, their trim gardens, and their flowery orchards; and varied by a short avenue leading to the equally picturesque old manor-house of darkest brick and quaintest architecture. Over the gates, too, we catch glimpses of more distant objects. The large white mansion where my

youth was spent, rising from its plantations, and the small church, embowered in trees, whose bell is heard at the close of day, breathing of peace and holiness.

'Towards the end of the lane a bright clear brook comes dancing over a pebbly bed, bringing with it all that water is wont to bring of life, of music, and of colour. Gaily it bubbles through banks adorned by the yellow flag, the flowering rush, the willow herb, the meadow-sweet, and the forget-me-not ; now expanding into a wide quiet pool, now contracted into a mimic rapid between banks that almost meet ; and so the little stream keeps us company, giving on this sunny day an indescribable feeling of refreshment and coolness, until we arrive at the end of the lane, where it slants away to the right, amidst a long stretch of water-meadows ; whilst we pause to gaze at the lovely scenery on the other hand, where a bit of marshy ground leads to the park paling and grand old trees of the Great House at Beech Hill through an open grove of oaks, terminated by a piece of wild woodland, so wild, that Robin Hood might have taken it for a glade in his own Forest of merry Sherwood.

Except about half a mile of gravelly road, leading from the gate of the manor-house to one of the smaller farms, and giving, by its warm orange tint, much of richness to the picture, there is nothing like a passable carriage-way in the whole length of the lane, so that the quiet is perfect.

Occasional passengers there are, however, gentle and simple ; my friend, Mr. B., for instance, has just cantered past on his blood-horse, with a nod and a smile, saying nothing, but apparently a good deal amused with my arrangements. And here comes a procession of cows going to milking, with an old attendant, still called the cow-boy, who, although they have seen me often enough, one should think, sitting underneath a tree writing, with my little maid close by hemming flounces, and my dog, Fanchon, nestled at my feet—still *wili* start as if they had never seen a woman before in their lives. Back they start and then they rush forward, and then the old drover emits certain sounds, which it is to be presumed the cows understand ; sounds so horribly discordant, that little Fanchon—although to her, too, they ought to be familiar, if not comprehensible—starts up in a fright on her feet, deranging all the economy of my extempore desk, and well-nigh

upsetting the inkstand. Very much frightened is my pretty pet, the arrantest coward that ever walked upon four legs! And so she avenges herself, as cowards are wont to do, by following the cows at safe distance, as soon as they are fairly past, and beginning to bark amain when they are nearly out of sight. Then follows a motley group of the same nature, colts, yearlings, calves, heifers, with a shouting boy and his poor shabby mongrel cur for driver. The poor cur wants to play with Fanchon, but Fanchon, besides being a coward, is also a beauty and holds her state; although I think, if he could but stay long enough, that the good humour of the poor merry creature would prove infectious and beguile the little lady into a game of romps. Lastly, appears the most solemn troop of all, a grave company of geese and goslings with the gander at their head, marching with the decorum and dignity proper to the birds who saved Rome. Fanchon, who once had an affair with a gander in which she was notably worsted, retreats out of sight and ensconces herself between me and the tree.

Besides these mere passing droves, we have a scattered little flock of ewes and lambs belonging to an industrious widow on the hill, and tended by two sunburnt smiling children, her son and daughter; a pretty pair, as innocent as the poor sheep they watch beside, never seen apart. And peasants returning from their work, and a stray urchin, birds-nesting: and that will make a complete catalogue of the frequenters of our lane—except, indeed, that now and then a village youth and village maiden will steal along the sheltered path. Perhaps they come to listen to the nightingales, for which the place is famous; perhaps they come to listen to the voice which each prefers to all the nightingales that ever sang—who knows?

Such are our passers-by. Sometimes, however, we have what I was about to call settled inhabitants in the shape of a camp of gipsies.

Just where the lane, enlivened by a rustic bridge, suddenly expands to nearly double its proper width, a nook appears, so dry, so snug, so shady, so cozy, that it is almost worth while to be a gipsy to live in it. Here, at almost every season, between May and November, may be seen two or three low tents with a cart or so drawn up under the hedge, an old

horse and sundry donkeys grazing round about. At safe distance from the encampment appears a fire, glimmering and vapoury by day, glowing into an intensity of blaze and comfort in the twilight. Sometimes a pot is hung on by the primitive contrivance of three sticks united at the top, sometimes a copper kettle dazzlingly bright and clean, and around it the usual group of picturesque women and children. The men, who carry on a small trade in forest ponies, are seldom visible at the camp: the children make baskets, the women sell them and tell fortunes; the former calling affording an excuse and an introduction to the less ostensible, but not less profitable craft.

Baskets they make, and baskets they sell at about double the price at which they might be bought at the dearest shop in the good town of Belford Regis; of this I am myself a living instance, having been talked into buying a pair at that rate only the last Saturday that ever fell.

I confess to liking the gipsies: strange, wild, peculiar people, whose origin, whose history, whose very language is a mystery! I do not like them the less that I have never experienced at their hands the slightest incivility or the most trifling wrong—for this affair of the baskets can hardly be called such, it being wholly at my option to buy or to refuse.

Last Saturday I happened to be sitting on a fallen tree, somewhat weary; my little damsel working as usual at the other end, and Fanchon balancing herself on the trunk between us, the curls of her brown coat—she is entirely brown—turning into gold as the sunshine played upon them through the leaves.

In this manner were we disposed, when a gipsy, with a pair of light baskets in her hand, came and offered them for sale. She was a middle-aged woman, who, in spite of her wandering life,—perhaps, because of that hardy, out-of-door life,—had retained much of her early beauty, the flashing eyes, the pearly teeth, the ruddy cheeks, the fine erect figure. It happened that, not wanting them, my companion had rejected these identical baskets, when brought to our door in the morning. She told me so, and I quietly declined them. My friend the gipsy apparently gave the matter up, and, claiming me as an old acquaintance, began to inquire after my health, and fell into the pleasantest strain of conversation

possible ; spoke of my father, who, she said, had been kind to her and to her tribe (no doubt she said truly ; he was kind to everybody, and had a liking for the wandering race) ; spoke of her children at the gipsy school in Dorsetshire ; of the excellent Mr. Crabbe, the friend of her people, at Southampton ; then she began stroking Fanchon (who actually, to my astonishment, permitted the liberty : in general she suffers no one to touch her that is not gentleman or lady) : Fanchon she stroked, and of Flush, the dear old dog, now lying under the rose-tree, she talked ; then, to leave no one unpropitiated, she threw out a word of pleasant augury, a sort of gratuitous fortune-telling, to the hemmer of flounces ; then she attacked me again with old recollections, trusting, with singular knowledge of human nature, to the power of the future upon the young, and of the past upon the old—to me she spoke of happy memories, to my companion of happiness to come ; and so (how could I help it ?) I bought the baskets.

I seem to have wandered pretty widely from my subject ; but the old dramatists loved these commoners of nature. Broome, in the “Jovial Crew,” has constructed a pleasant and genial comedy out of no higher materials, and our authours themselves, in “Beggar’s Bush,” have made most dramatic and effective use of these outlawed wanderers, and would, I am sure, have been the last to blame me for dallying in their company.

I extract some of the charming lyrics interspersed through their plays, not starting from them, as Ben Jonson’s do, a shining gem in a dusky mine, but incorporate with the golden ore as rich and precious as themselves.

FROM THE “MAID’S TRAGEDY.”

Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal yew ;
Maidens willow branches bear,
Say I died true.
My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth ;
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth.

FROM THE “LITTLE FRENCH LAWYER.”

This way, this way, come and hear,
You that hold these pleasures dear ;

Fill your ears with our sweet sound,
 While we melt the frozen ground.
 This way, come : make haste, O fair !
 Let your clear eyes gild the air.
 Come and bless us with your sight ;
 This way, this way, seek delight !

FROM THE "ELDER BROTHER."

Beauty clear and fair,
 Where the air
 Rather like a perfume dwells ;
 Where the violet and the rose
 Their blue veins in blush disclose,
 And come to honour nothing else.

Where to live near
 And planted there,
 Is to live, and still live new ;
 Where to gain a favour is
 More than light, perpetual bliss,
 Make me live by serving you.

Dear, back again recall,
 To this light :
 A stranger to himself and all.
 Both the wonder and the story
 Shall be yours, and eke the glory ;
 I am your perpetual thrall.

FROM "VALENTINIAN."

The following songs are strikingly illustrative of a peculiarity that has often struck me in reading the dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher—the absence of any mark of antiquity, either in the diction or the construction. Hardly anything in their verse smacks of the age. They were contemporary with Ben Jonson, and yet how rugged is his English compared with their fluent and courtly language ! They were almost contemporary with a greater than he—a greater far than any or all ; and yet Shakespeare's blank verse has an antique sound when read after theirs. Dryden, himself so perfect a model as regards style, says in one of those masterpieces of criticism, the prefaces to his plays, that in Beaumont and Fletcher our language has attained to its perfection. I doubt if it have much improved since, nor has it for the uses of poetry very materially altered. This "Invocation to Sleep" might, for diction and rhythm, have been written to-day, always supposing that we had anybody capable of writing it :—

Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
 Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
 On this afflicted Prince ! Fall like a cloud
 In gentle showers ; give nothing that is loud
 Or painful to his slumbers ; easy, light,
 And as a purling stream thou son of night
 Pass by his troubled senses ; sing his pain,
 Like hollow-murmuring wind or silver rain !
 Into this Prince, gently, oh gently slide,
 And kiss him into slumbers like a bride !

The same may be said of the next.

God Lyeus, ever young,
 Ever honoured, ever sung ;
 Stained with blood of lusty grapes,
 In a thousand lusty shapes.
 Dance upon the mazer's brim,
 In the crimson liquor swim ;
 From the plenteous hand divine,
 Let a river run with wine.
 God of youth, let this day here
 Enter neither care nor fear !

FROM "ROLLO."

Take, oh, take those lips away,
 That so sweetly were forsworn ;
 And those eyes, the break of day,
 Lights that do mislead the morn.
 But my kisses bring again,—
 Seals of love, though sealed in vain.
 Hide, oh, hide those hills of snow,
 Which thy frozen bosom bears,
 On whose tops the pinks that grow
 Are of those that April wears.
 But first set my poor heart free,
 Bound in those icy chains by thee.

We are irresistibly reminded of the "Pensero" in reading the fine song that follows, as we are of "Comus" in the "Faithful Shepherdess." That Milton had Fletcher in his thoughts cannot be doubted ; but the great epic poet added so much from his own rich store, that the imitation may well be pardoned by the admirers of both, the rather that the earlier bard stands the test of such a comparison well. Both are crowned poets ; but they wear their bays with a difference.

FROM THE "NICE VALOUR, OR THE PASSIONATE MADMAN."

Hence all you vain delights,
 As short as are the nights,
 Wherin you speed your folly !

There's nought in this life sweet,
 If men were wise to see't,
 But only melancholy,
 Oh sweetest melancholy !
 Welcome, folded arms, and fix'd eyes,
 A sigh that piercing mortifies,
 A look that's fastened to the ground,
 A tongue chained up without a sound !
 Fountain heads and pathless groves,
 Places which pale passion loves !
 Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
 Are warmly housed, save bats and owls !
 A midnight bell, a parting groan,
 These are the sounds we feed upon.
 Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley,
 Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.

THE SATYR'S SPEECH, FROM THE " FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS."¹²

Through yon same bending plain,
 That flings his arms down to the main,
 And thro' these thick woods have I run
 Whose bottom never kissed the sun,
 Since the lusty Spring began.
 All to please my master Pan,
 Have I trotted without rest
 To get him fruit ; for at a feast
 He entertains this coming night
 His paramour, the Syrinx bright.
 But behold, a fairer sight !
 By that heavenly form of thine,
 Brightest fair, thou art divine ;
 Sprung from great immortal race
 Of the gods ; for in thy face
 Shines more awful majesty,
 Than dull weak mortality
 Dare with misty eyes behold
 And live ! Therefore on this mould
 Lowly do I bend my knee
 In worship of thy deity.
 Deign it, goddess, from my hand
 To receive whate'er this land
 From her fertile womb doth send
 Of her choice fruits ; and but lend
 Belief to that the satyr tells :
 Fairer by the famous wells
 To this present day ne'er grew,
 Never better nor more true.
 Here be grapes, whose lusty blood
 Is the learned poet's good ;
 Sweeter yet did never crown
 The head of Bacchus ; nuts more brown

Than the squirrel whose teeth crack 'em ;
 Deign, oh ! fairest fair, to take 'em !
 For these black-eyed Dryope
 Hath oftentimes commanded me
 With my clasped knee to climb :
 See, how well the lusty time
 Hath decked their rising cheeks in red,
 Such as on your lips is spread.
 Here be berries for a queen,
 Some be red, some be green ;
 These are of that luscious meat
 The great god Pan himself doth eat :
 All these, and what the woods can yield,
 The hanging mountain, or the field,
 I freely offer, and ere long
 Will bring you more, more sweet and strong ;
 Till when humbly leave I take,
 Lest the great Pan do awake,
 That sleeping lies in a deep glade,
 Under a broad beech's shade.
 I must go, I must run,
 Swifter than the fiery sun.

The charming pastoral from whence this beautiful speech is taken, was irrevocably condemned in the theatre on the first and only night of representation ; which catastrophe, added to a similar one that befell Congreve's best comedy, "The Way of the World," both authors being at the time in the very flood-tide of popularity, has been an unspeakable comfort to unsuccessful dramatists ever since. I recall it chiefly to mention the hearty spirit with which two of the most eminent of Fletcher's friendly rivals came to the rescue with laudatory verses. The circumstance does so much honour to all parties, and some of the lines are so good, that I cannot help quoting them. George Chapman says that the poem—

Renews the golden world, and holds through all
 The holy laws of homely Pastoral ;
 Where flowers and founts and nymphs and semi-gods
 And all the graces find their old abodes ;
 Where forests flourish but in endless verse,
 And meadows, nothing fit for purchasers :
 This iron age—

(Think of that in the days of James the First !)

This iron age that eats itself will never
 Bite at your golden world, that others ever
 Loved as itself.

Ben Jonson, first characterising the audience after a fashion by no means complimentary, says that the play failed because it wanted the laxity of moral and of language which they expected and desired. He continues:—

I that am glad thy innocence was thy guilt,
And wish that all the Muses' blood were spilt
In such a martyrdom, to vex their eyes,
Do crown thy murdered poem, which shall rise
A glorified work to time, when fire
Or moths shall eat what all these fools admire.

For the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, that mine of superb and regal poetry, I have no room now. They must remain untouched.

IX.

FASHIONABLE POETS.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

It is now nearly thirty years ago that two youths appeared at Cambridge, of such literary and poetical promise as the University had not known since the days of Gray. What is rarer still, the promise was kept. One of these “marvellous boys” turned out a man of world-wide renown—the spirited poet, the splendid orator, the brilliant historian, the delightful essayist—in a word, Thomas Babington Macaulay, now, I suppose, incontestibly our greatest living writer. The other was the subject of this paper.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed—(I wish it had pleased his godfathers and godmothers to bestow upon him a plain English Christian name, and spare him and me the vulgar abomination of this conglomeration of inharmonious sounds!)—Winthrop Mackworth Praed was born in London, in the beginning of this century, of parents belonging to the great banking-house, which still remains in the family. Sent early to Eton, he, while yet a schoolboy, followed the example of Canning, who appears to have been the object of his emulation in more points than one, and in conjunction with Mr. Moultrie set up a paper called the “Etonian,” to which he was the principal contributor, and which was so successful that it went through four editions, and established for the

chief writer a high reputation for preeocious talent. At Cambridge this reputation was more than sustained. He was the pride and glory of Trinity, and left college with an almost unprecedented number of prizes, for Greek ode and Latin epigram. Even the greater world of London, where University fame so often melts away and is seen no more, was equally favourable to Mr. Praed. He and his friendly rival, Mr. Macaulay, gave their valuable assistance to "*Knight's Quarterly Magazine*," and every fresh article made its impression. He wrote also in the "*New Monthly*," and in the annuals, then seen on every table, with still increasing brilliancy ; contributed pungent political satire to other journals, and finally entered Parliament with such hopes and expectations as his talents might well warrant, but which have seldom been excited by an untried member.

In the House of Commons he did quite enough to justify the warmest anticipations of his friends, and to earn for himself the name of a "*rising man*," that most auspicious of all names to a political aspirant.

What he might have become had life been spared, it were now vain to conjecture. He married happily, he died young. Light, lively, brilliant, the darling of every society that he entered, he was yet most beloved by those who knew him best. To me it seems that had he outlived the impetuosity of youth, he would have become something higher and better than a political partisan, however clever, or a fashionable poet, however elegant. There was through all his poetry—and it is its deepest although not its most obvious charm—a love of the genuine and the true, a scorn for the false and the pretending, which is the foundation of all that is really good in eloquence as well as in poetry, in conduct and in character, as well as in art. The germ of the patriot and the statesman is to be found in the love of truth and the hatred of pretence ; and never were they more developed than in the poems of Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

That these poems are the most graceful and finished verses of society that can be found in our language, it is impossible to doubt. At present they are so scarce that the volume from which I transcribe the greater part of the following extracts is an American collection, procured with considerable difficulty and delay from the United States. Others of the poems

are taken from his own manuscripts, most kindly lent to me by one of his nearest connexions, whom I am happy enough to call my friend; and one or two of the charades I have copied from the "Penny Magazine" of the author's early friend, Mr. Charles Knight, where they are strangely enough called enigmas.

THE VICAR.

Some years ago, ere Time and Taste
 Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
 When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
 And roads as little known as scurvy,
 The man who lost his way between
 St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
 Was always shown across the Green,
 And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
 Fair Margaret in her tidy kirtle
 Led the lorn traveller up the path,
 Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;
 And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
 Upon the parlour steps collected,
 Wagged all their tails and seemed to say :
 "Our master knows you; you're expected."

Up rose the Reverend Doctor Brown,
 Up rose the Doctor's "winsome marrow;"
 The lady laid her knitting down,
 Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow.
 Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
 Pundit or papist, saint or sinner,
 He found a stable for his steed,
 And welcome for himself and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey's end,
 And warmed himself in court or college,
 He had not gained an honest friend,
 And twenty curious scraps of knowledge;
 If he departed as he came,
 With no new light on love or liquor,
 Good sooth the traveller was to blame,
 And not the Vicarage or the Vicar

His talk was like a stream which runs
 With rapid change from rocks to roses;
 It slipped from politics to puns;
 It passed from Mahomet to Moses;
 Beginning with the laws which keep
 The planets in their radiant courses,
 And ending with some precept deep
 For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound divine,
 Of loud dissent the mortal terror ;
 And when by dint of page and line,
 He 'stablished truth or startled error,
 The Baptist found him far too deep,
 The Deist sighed with saving sorrow,
 And the lean Levite went to sleep
 And dreamt of eating pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or showed
 That earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
 Without refreshment on the road
 From Jerome or from Athanasius :
 And sure a righteous zeal inspired
 The hand and head that penned and planned them,
 For all who understood admired,
 And some who did not understand them.

He wrote too, in a quiet way,
 Small treatises and smaller verses,
 And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
 And hints to noble lords and nurses ;
 True histories of last year's ghost ;
 Lines to a ringlet or a turban,
 And trifles for the "Morning Post,"
 And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
 Although he had a knack of joking ;
 He did not make himself a bear,
 Although he had a taste for smoking.
 And when religious sects ran mad,
 He held, in spite of all his learning,
 That if a man's belief is bad
 It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind and loved to sit
 In the low hut or garnished cottage,
 And praise the farmer's homely wit,
 And share the widow's homelier pottage.
 At his approach complaint grew mild,
 And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
 The clammy lips of fever smiled
 The welcome that they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
 Of Julius Cæsar or of Venus ;
 From him I learned the rule of three,
 Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and Quæ genus.
 I used to singe his powdered wig,
 To steal the staff he put such trust in
 And make the puppy dance a jig
 When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change ! In vain I look
 For haunts in which by boyhood trifled ;
 The level lawn, the trickling brook,
 The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled !
 The church is larger than before,
 You reach it by a carriage entry ;
 It holds three hundred people more,
 And pews are fitted for the gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat : you'll hear
 The doctrine of a gentle Johnian ;
 Whose hand is white, whose voice is clear,
 Whose tone is very Ciceronian.
 Where is the old man laid ? Look down
 And construe on the slab before you—
 “ Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,
 Vir nullâ non donandus lauro.”

The man who wrote the above admirable portrait was as good as he was clever. The next has equal merit :—

QUINCE.

Near a small village in the West,
 Where many very worthy people
 Eat, drink, play whist, and do their best
 To guard from evil church and steeple,
 There stood—alas, it stands no more !—
 A tenement of brick and plaster,
 Of which for forty years and four,
 My good friend Quince was lord and master.

Welcome was he in hut and hall,
 To maids and matrons, peers and peasants ;
 He won the sympathies of all
 By making puns and making presents.
 Though all the parish was at strife,
 He kept his counsel and his carriage,
 And laughed, and loved a quiet life,
 And shrunk from chancery-suits and marriage.

Sound was his claret and his head,
 Warm was his double ale and feelings ;
 His partners at the whist-club said
 That he was faultless in his dealings.
 He went to church but once a-week,
 Yet Dr. Poundtext always found him
 An upright man who studied Greek,
 And liked to see his friends around him.

Asylums, hospitals, and schools
 He used to swear were made to cozen ;
 All who subscribed to them were fools—
 And he subscribed to half-a-dozen.

It was his doctrine that the poor
 Were always able, never willing ;
 And so the beggar at the door
 Had first abuse and then a shilling.

Some public principles he had,
 But was no flatterer nor fretter ;
 He rapped his box when things were bad,
 And said I cannot make them better.
 And much he loathed the patriot's snort,
 And much he scorned the placeman's snuffle,
 And cut the fiercest quarrels short
 With, " Patience, gentlemen, and shuffle ! "

For full ten years his pointer, Speed,
 Had couched beneath his master's table,
 For twice ten years his old white steed
 Had fattened in his master's stable.
 Old Quince averred upon his troth
 They were the ugliest beasts in Devon :
 And none knew why he fed them both
 With his own hands six days in seven.

Whene'er they heard his ring or knock,
 Quicker than thought the village slatterns
 Flung down the novel, smoothed the frock,
 And took up Mrs. Glasse or patterns.
 Alice was studying baker's bills ;
 Louisa looked the queen of knitters ;
 Jane happened to be hemming frills ;
 And Nell by chance was making fritters.

But all was vain. And while decay
 Came like a tranquil moonlight o'er him,
 And found him gouty still and gay,
 With no fair nurse to bless or bore him ;
 His rugged smile and easy chair,
 His dread of matrimonial lectures,
 His wig, his stick, his powdered hair
 Were themes for very strange conjectures.

Some sages thought the stars above
 Had crazed him with excess of knowledge ;
 Some heard he had been crossed in love
 Before he came away from college ;
 Some darkly hinted that His Grace
 Did nothing, great or small, without him ;
 Some whispered, with a solemn face,
 That there was something odd about him.

I found him at three score and ten
 A single man, but bent quite double,
 Sickness was coming on him then
 To take him from a world of trouble.

He prosed of sliding down the hill,
 Discovered he grew older daily ;
 One frosty day he made his will,
 The next he sent for Dr. Baillie.
 And so he lived, and so he died ;
 When last I sat beside his pillow,
 He shook my hand ; "Ah me !" he cried,
 "Penelope must wear the willow !
 Tell her I hugged her rosy chain
 While life was flickering in the socket,
 And say that when I call again
 I'll bring a licence in my pocket.
 "I've left my house and grounds to Fag,
 (I hope his master's shoes will suit him !)
 And I've bequeathed to you my nag,
 To feed him for my sake, or shoot him.
 The vicar's wife will take old Fox ;
 She'll find him an uncommon mouser,
 And let her husband have my box,
 My Bible and my Assmanshäuser.
 "Whether I ought to die or not,
 My doctors cannot quite determine ;
 It's only clear that I shall rot,
 And be, like Priam, food for vermin.
 My debts are paid. But Nature's debt
 Almost escaped my recollection !
 Tom, we shall meet again ; and yet
 I cannot leave you my direction !"

The next poem, which describes a first flirtation (for it hardly deserves the name of first love), is as true as if it had been written in prose by Jane Austen.

THE BELLE OF THE BALL.

Years, years ago, ere yet my dreams
 Had been of being wise or witty ;
 Ere I had done with writing themes,
 Or yawned o'er this infernal "Chitty,"
 Years, years ago, while all my joys
 Were in my fowling-pieces and filly,
 In short, while I was yet a boy,
 I fell in love with Laura Lilly.
 I saw her at a country ball,
 There where the sound of flute and fiddle
 Gave signal, sweet in that old hall,
 Of hands across and down the middle ;
 Hers was the subtlest spell by far,
 Of all that sets young hearts romancing,
 She was our queen, our rose, our star,
 And when she danced—Oh, heaven ! her dancing !

Dark was her hair ; her hand was white ;
 Her voice was exquisitely tender ;
 Her eyes were full of liquid light ;
 I never saw a waist so slender.
 Her every look, her every smile,
 Shot right and left a score of arrows ;
 I thought 'twas Venus from her isle,
 And wondered where she'd left her sparrows !

She talked of politics or prayers,
 Of Southey's prose, or Wordsworth's sonnets,
 Of daggers, or of dancing bears,
 Of battles, or the last new bonnets ;
 By candle-light, at twelve o'clock,
 To me it mattered not a tittle,
 If those bright lips had quoted Locke,
 I might have thought they murmured Little.

Through sunny May, through sultry June
 I loved her with a love eternal ;
 I spoke her praises to the moon,
 I wrote them for the Sunday journal.
 My mother laughed ; I soon found out
 That ancient ladies have no feeling.
 My father frowned ; but how should gout
 Find any happiness in kneeling ?

She was the daughter of a dean,
 Rich, fat, and rather apoplectic ;
 She had one brother just thirteen,
 Whose colour was extremely hectic ;
 Her grandmother for many a year
 Had fed the parish with her bounty ;
 Her second cousin was a peer,
 And lord-lieutenant of the county.

But titles and the three per cents.
 And mortgages and great relations,
 And India Bonds, and tithes, and rents,
 Oh ! what are they to love's sensations ?
 Black eyes, fair foreheads, clustering locks,
 Such wealth, such honours Cupid chooses ;
 He cares as little for the stocks,
 As Baron Rothschild for the Muses.

She sketched : the vale, the wood, the beach
 Grew lovelier from her pencil's shading ;
 She botanized : I envied each
 Young blossom in her boudoir fading ;
 She warbled Handel : it was grand.
 She made the Catalani jealous ;
 She touched the organ : I could stand
 For hours and hours and blow the bellows.

She kept an album, too, at home,
 Well filled with all an album's glories ;
 Paintings of butterflies and Rome ;
 Patterns for trimming ; Persian stories ;
 Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo ;
 Fierce odes to famine and to slaughter,
 And autographs of Prince Le Boo,
 And recipes for elder-water.

And she was flattered, worshipped, bored,
 Her steps were watched, her dress was noted,
 Her poodle dog was quite adored,
 Her sayings were extremely quoted.
 She laughed, and every heart was glad
 As if the taxes were abolished ;
 She frowned, and every look was sad,
 As if the opera were demolished.

She smiled on many just for fun—
 I knew that there was nothing in it ;
 I was the first, the only one,
 Her heart had thought of for a minute.
 I knew it, for she told me so,
 In phrase that was divinely moulded ;—
 She wrote a charming hand, and oh !
 How neatly all her notes were folded.

Our love was like most other loves,—
 A little glow, a little shiver ;
 A rosebud and a pair of gloves,
 And “Fly not yet,” upon the river ;
 Some jealousy of some one's heir ;
 Some hopes of dying broken-hearted ;
 A miniature ; a lock of hair ;
 The usual vows ;—and then we parted.

We parted : months and years rolled by ;
 We met again some summers after ;
 Our parting was all sob and sigh !
 Our meeting was all mirth and laughter !
 For in my heart's most secret cell
 There had been many other lodgers ;
 And she was not the ball-room belle,
 But only Mistress—something—Rogers !

The political satire is equally good-humoured, equally characteristic, and equally clever, perhaps cleverer—if that can be—than these specimens. Some of the objects of that keen and pungent verse still remain alive, although many are, like the author, removed from this transitory scene. I abstain, therefore, from inserting what might by possibility cause pain. The following cavalier version of the great fight of

Marston Moor is transcribed from the author's own manuscript, apparently the first sketch. It is wonderful how little that fertile and fluent pen found to alter or to amend.

To horse ! to horse ! Sir Nicholas, the clarion's note is high !
 To horse ! to horse ! Sir Nicholas, the big drum makes reply !
 Ere this hath Lucas marched, with his gallant cavaliers,
 And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter in our ears.
 To horse ! to horse ! Sir Nicholas ! White Guy is at the door,
 And the raven wets his beak o'er the field of Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken prayer,
 And she brought a silken banner down the narrow turret-stair ;
 Oh ! many were the tears that those radiant eyes had shed,
 As she traced the bright word "Glory," in the gay and glancing thread ;
 And mournful was the smile which o'er those lovely features ran,
 As she said, "It is your lady's gift ; unfurl it in the van !"

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and boldest ride,
 Midst the steel-clad files of Skippon, the black dragoons of Pride ;
 The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sickly qualm,
 And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm ;
 When they see my lady's gew-gaw flaunt proudly on their wing,
 And hear her loyal soldier's shout, 'For God and for the King.'

'Tis noon. The ranks are broken, along the royal line
 They fly, the braggarts of the court ! the bullies of the Rhine !
 Stout Langdale's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is down,
 And Rupert sheathes his rapier with a curse and with a frown,
 And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their flight,
 "The German boar had better far have supped in York to-night."

The knight is left alone, his steel cap cleft in twain,
 His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a gory stain ;
 Yet still he waves his banner, and cries amid the rout,
 "For Church and King, fair gentlemen ! spur on and fight it out !"
 And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now he hums a stave,
 And now he quotes a stage play, and now he fells a knave.

God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas ! thou hast no thought of fear ;
 God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas ! for fearful odds are here !
 The rebels hem thee in, and at every cut and thrust,
 "Down, down," they cry, "with Belial ! down with him to the dust."
 "I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's trusty sword
 This day were doing battle for the Saints and for the Lord !"

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower,
 The grey-haired warder watches from the castle's topmost tower ;
 "What news ? what news, old Hubert ?"—"The battle's lost and
 The royal troops are melting, like mist before the sun ! [won ;
 And a wounded man approaches ;—I'm blind and cannot see,
 Yet sure I am that sturdy st  p, my master's step must be !"]

"I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from as rude and red a
 As e'er was proof of soldier's thew, or theme for minstrel's lay ! [fray,
 Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor quantum suff.
 I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with boots and buff ;—

Though Guy through many a gaping wound is breathing forth his life,
And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and faithful wife !

“Sweet ! we will fill our money-bags, and freight a ship for France,
And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land’s mischance ;
For if the worst befall me, why better axe and rope,
Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for a pope !
Alas ! alas ! my gallant Guy !—curse on the crop-eared boor,
Who sent me, with my standard, on foot from Marston Moor !

I pass some poems that have been greatly praised, “The Red Fisherman,” “Lilian,” and “The Troubadour,” to come to the charades—the charming charades—which, in their form of short narrative poems, he may be said to have invented. I insert a few taken almost at random from his brilliant collection :—

I.

I graced Don Pedro’s revelry,
All dressed in fire and feather ;
When loveliness and chivalry
Were met to feast together.
He flung the slave who moved the lid,
A purse of maravedis ;—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
For me and for the ladies.

He vowed a vow, that noble knight,
Before he went to table,
To make his only sport the fight,
His only couch the stable,
Till he had dragged as he was bid
Five score of Turks to Cadiz ;—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
For me and for the ladies.

To ride through mountains, where my *First*
A banquet would be reckoned ;
Through deserts where to quench their thirst
Men vainly turn my *Second*.
To leave the gates of fair Madrid,
And dare the gates of Hades ;—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
For me and for the ladies.

II.

Morning is beaming o’er brake and bower;
Hark ! to the chimes from yonder tower !
Call ye my *First* from her chamber now,
With her snowy veil and her jewelled brow.

Lo ! where my *Second*, in gorgeous array,
Leads from his stable her beautiful bay,
Looking for her as he curvets by
With an arching neck and a glancing eye.

Spread is the banquet and studied the song,
Ranged in meet order the menial throng,
Jerome is ready with book and with stole,
And the maidens strew flowers—but where is my *Whole*?

Look to the hill ! is he climbing its side ?
Look to the stream ! is he crossing its tide ?
Out on the false one ! he comes not yet—
Lady, forget him ! yea, scorn and forget !

The next is a surname, and one of the most beautiful compliments ever offered to a great poet :—

III.

Come from my *First*, ay, come !
The battle dawn is nigh ;
And the screaming trump and the thundering drum
Are calling thee to die !

Fight as thy father fought ;
Fall as thy father fell ;
Thy task is taught ; thy shroud is wrought ;
So,—forward and farewell !

Toll ye my *Second* ! toll !
Fling high the flambeau's light ;
And sing the hymn for a parted soul
Beneath the silent night !

The wreath upon his head,
The cross upon his breast,
Let the prayer be said, and the tear be shed,
So,—take him to his rest !

Call ye my *Whole*, ay, call
The lord of lute and lay ;
And let him greet the sable pall
With a noble song to-day :

Go, call him by his name !
No fitter hand may crave
To light the flame of a soldier's fame
On the turf of a soldier's grave.

I add a few more of these graceful pleasantries :—

IV.

He talked of daggers and of darts,
Of passions and of pains,
Of weeping eyes and wounded hearts,
Of kisses and of chains ;
He said, though love was kin to grief,
He was not born to grieve ;
He said, though many rued belief,
She safely might believe.

But still the lady shook her head,
 And swore by yea and nay,
 My *Whole* was all that he had said
 And all that he could say.

He said my *First* whose silent car
 Was slowly wandering by,
 Veiled in a vapour faint and far
 Through the unfathomed sky,
 Was like the smile whose rosy light
 Across her young lips passed,
 Yet, oh ! it was not half so bright,
 It changed not half so fast.
 But still the lady shook her head,
 And swore by yea and nay,
 My *Whole* was all that he had said
 And all that he could say.

And then he set a cypress wreath
 Upon his raven hair,
 And drew his rapier from its sheath—
 Which made the lady stare ;
 And said his life-blood's purple glow
 My *Second* there should dim,
 If she he loved and worshipped so,
 Would only weep for him.
 But still the lady shook her head,
 And swore by yea and nay,
 My *Whole* was all that he had said
 And all that he could say.

v.

My *First* came forth in booted state,
 For fair Valencia bound ;
 And smiled to feel my *Second's* weight,
 And hear its creaking sound.

“ And here's a gaoler sweet,” quoth he,
 “ You cannot bribe or cozen ;
 To keep one ward in custody
 Wise men will forge a dozen.”

But daybreak saw a lady guide
 My *Whole* across the plain,
 With a handsome cavalier beside,
 To hold her bridle-rein :

And “ blessings on the bonds,” quoth he,
 “ Which wrinkled age imposes ;
 If woman must a prisoner be,
 Her chain should be of roses.”

VI.

My *First* was dark o'er earth and air,
 As dark as she could be !
 The stars that gemmed her ebon hair
 Were only two or three :
 King Cole saw thrice as many there
 As you or I could see.
 "Away, King Cole," mine hostess said,
 "Flagon and flask are dry ;
 Your steed is neighing in the shed,
 For he knows a storm is nigh."
 She set my *Second* on his head,
 And she set it all awry.

VII.

Sir Hilary charged at Agincourt,—
 Sooth 't was an awful day !
 And though in that old age of sport
 The rufflers of the camp and court
 Had little time to pray,
 'T is said Sir Hilary muttered there
 Two syllables by way of prayer.
 My *First* to all the brave and proud
 Who see to-morrow's sun ;
 My *Next* with her cold and quiet cloud
 To those who find their dewy shroud
 Before to-day's be done ;
 And both together to all blue eyes
 That weep when a warrior nobly dies.

This charade is still a mystery to me. Solve it, fair readers !

X.

PEASANT POETS.

JOHN CLARE.

NEARLY at the same period, when Macaulay and Praed sprang into public life, the world of letters was startled by the announcement of a new poet, a Northamptonshire peasant, whose claims to distinction were vouched for by judges of no ordinary sagacity, little given to mistake, and by no means addicted to enthusiasm. His character was blameless and amiable. Although of a frame little suited to severity of toil, he had for many years supported his aged parents by manual labour ; and in bringing his powers into the light of day, he had undergone more than the ordinary amount of delay, of

suspense, of disappointment, and of “the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick.”

From the prefaces to his three publications, the “Poems, descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery,” “The Village Minstrel,” and “The Rural Muse,” his early history may be collected. At the age of thirteen, when he could read tolerably, and knew something of writing and arithmetic, he met, accidentally, with “Thomson’s Seasons,” a book which not only awakened in his mind the love of poetry, but led him at once to the kind of poetry in which, from situation and from natural aptitude, he was most likely to succeed. For another thirteen years his brief leisure was filled with attempts, more or less successful, to clothe, in the language of verse, his own feelings and observations. His chief trial, during this long probation, must have been his entire loneliness of mind—the absence of all companionship or sympathy. At this time he met with the “Patty” whom he afterwards married, and, in the hope of improving his circumstances, began to consider seriously about publishing a small volume by subscription; and having ascertained that the expense of three hundred copies of a prospectus would not be more than a pound, he set himself resolutely to work, and by hard labour, day and night, at length succeeded in accumulating the required sum.

“I distributed my papers,” said the poor author, “but as I could get no way of pushing them into higher circles than those with whom I was acquainted, they consequently passed off as quietly as if they had still been in my possession, unprinted and not seen.” For a long while the number of subscribers stood at seven. At length, however, a copy of the proposals won their way to London. Messrs. Taylor and Hessey gave twenty pounds for the Poems; and, what was far better for the author, contrived to obtain for them immediate publicity.

The little volume was striking in what it had and in what it wanted. The very struggle between original thought and imperfect expression sometimes resulted in happiness and beauty. One thing was certain: John Clare was no imitator. Persons of taste and generosity in the higher classes took him by the hand. Lord Exeter sent for him to Burleigh, and hearing that he earned thirty pounds per annum by field labour, settled an annuity of fifteen pounds upon him, with

Bush

a view to his devoting half his time to agricultural occupations, and half to literary pursuits. This benevolent proposal, which sounds so hopefully, proved a notable failure, chiefly in consequence of our national failing of running after everything and everybody that has attained a sufficient portion of notoriety. Poor Clare became as great a lion as if he had committed two or three murders. He was frequently interrupted, as often as three times a-day, during his labours in the harvest-field, to gratify the curiosity of admiring visitors ; and a plan, excellent in its principle, was abandoned perforce. Other wealthy and liberal noblemen joined in the good work. Lord Spencer gave ten pounds per annum. A subscription was set on foot by Lord Radstock, to which the present King of the Belgians, Lord Fitzwilliam, and Lord John Russell contributed generously, and which, together with the profits of his works—for “The Village Minstrel” had now been published—realized for him altogether an annual income of five-and-forty pounds. This appeared affluence to our poet, and he married.

Praised by the “Quarterly,” and befriended by noble patrons and generous booksellers, his prospects seemed more than commonly smiling. His third publication, too, “The Rural Muse,” in spite of its unpromising title, more than justified all that had been done for him. The improvement was most remarkable. That he should gain a greater command over language, a choicer selection of words, and the knowledge of grammatical construction, which he had wanted before, was to be expected ; but the habit of observation seemed to have increased in fineness and accuracy in proportion as he gained the power of expression, and the delicacy of his sentiment kept pace with the music of his versification. What can be closer to nature than his description of the nightingale’s nest ?

*Alb
H
bel*

Up this green woodland ride let’s softly rove,
And list the Nightingale ; she dwells just here.
Hush ! let the wood-gate softly clap, for fear
The noise might drive her from her home of love ;
For here I’ve heard her many a merry year,
At morn, at eve, nay, all the livelong day,
As though she lived on song. This very spot
Just where that old man’s-beard all wildly trails
Rude arbours o’er the road, and stops the way ;
And where the child its blue-bell flowers hath got,
Laughing and creeping through the mossy rails ;

There have I hunted like a very boy,
 Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn,
 To find her nest, and see her feed **her** young.
 And vainly did I many hours employ :
 All seemed as hidden as a thought unborn.
 And where those crumpling fern-leaves ramp among
 The hazel's under boughs, I've nestled down
 And watched her while she sang ; and her renown
 Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird
 Should have no better dress than russet brown.
 Her wings would tremble in her ecstasy,
 And feathers stand on end, as 'twere with joy,
 And mouth wide open to release her heart
 Of its out-sobbing songs. The happiest part
 Of Summer's fame she shared, for so to me
 Did happy fancies shapen her employ.
 But if I touched a bush, or scarcely stirred,
 All in a moment stopt. I watched in vain :
 The timid bird had left the hazel-bush,
 And oft in distance hid to sing again.
 Lost in a wilderness of listening leaves,
 Rich ecstasy would pour its luscious strain,
 Till envy spurred the emulating Thrush
 To start less wild and scarce inferior songs ;
 For while of half the year Care him bereaves,
 To damp the ardour of his speckled breast,
 The Nightingale to Summer's life belongs,
 And naked trees and Winter's nipping wrongs
 Are strangers to her music and her rest.
 Her joys are ever green, her world is wide !
 Hark ! there she is, as usual. Let's be hush ;
 For in this black-thorn clump, if rightly guessed,
 Her curious house is hidden. Part aside
 Those hazel-branches in a gentle way,
 And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs,
 For we will have another search to-day,
 And hunt this fern-strewn thorn-clump round and round,
 And where this reeded wood-grass idly bows
 We'll wade right through ; it is a likely nook.
 In such like spots, and often on the ground
 They'll build where rude boys never think to look ;—
 Aye, as I live ! her secret nest is here
 Upon this white-thorn stump ! I've searched about
 For hours in vain. There, put that bramble by,—
 Nay, trample on its branches, and get near.
 How subtle is the bird ! She started out,
 And raised a plaintive note of danger nigh
 Ere we were past the brambles ; and now, near
 Her nest, she sudden stops, as choking fear
 That might betray her home. So even now
 We'll leave it as we found it ; safety's guard
 Of pathless solitudes shall keep it still.



We will not plunder music of its dower,
 Nor turn this spot of happiness to thrall,
 For melody seems hid in every flower
 That blossoms near thy home. These bluebells all
 Seem bowing with the beautiful in song ;
 And gaping cuckoo-flower, with spotted leaves,
 Seems blushing of the singing it has heard.
 How curious is the nest ! No other bird
 Uses such loose materials, or weaves
 Its dwellings in such spots ! Dead oaken leaves
 Are placed without, and velvet moss within.
 And little scraps of grass, and scant and spare,
 What hardly seem materials, down and hair ;
 For from men's haunts she nothing seems to win.

* * * *

Snug lie her curious eggs, in number five,
 Of deadened green, or rather olive-brown,
 And the old prickly thorn-bush guards them well.
 So here we'll leave them, still unknown to wrong,
 As the old woodland's legacy of song.

Is not this nature itself ? And again, another nest, as true
 every whit in its difference.

THE PETTICHAP'S NEST.

Well ! in my many walks I've rarely found
 A place less likely for a bird to form
 Its nest ; close by the rut-gulled waggon-road,
 And on the almost bare foot-trodden ground,
 With scarce a clump of grass to keep it warm,
 Where not a thistle spreads its spears abroad,
 Or prickly bush to shield it from harm's way ;
 And yet so snugly made, that none may spy
 It out, save peradventure. You and I
 Had surely passed it in our walk to-day
 Had chance not led us by it ! Nay, e'en now,
 Had not the old bird heard us trampling by,
 And fluttered out, we had not seen it lie
 Brown as the road-way side. Small bits of hay
 Pluckt from the old propt haystack's pleachy brow,
 And withered leaves, made up its outward wall,
 Which from the gnarled oak-dotterel yearly fall,
 And in the old hedge-bottom rot away.
 Built like an oven, through a little hole,
 Scarcely admitting e'en two fingers in,
 Hard to discern, the birds snug entrance win.
 'T is lined with feathers, warm as silken stole,
 Softer than seats of down for painless ease,
 And full of eggs scarce bigger e'en than peas.
 Here's one most delicate, with spots as small
 As dust, and of a faint and pinky red.

* * * *

And they are left to many dangerous ways.
 A green grasshopper's jump might break the shells ;
 Yet lowing oxen pass them morn and night,
 And restless sheep around them hourly stray.

* * * *

I add yet another :—

THE YELLOWHAMMER'S NEST.

Just by the wooden bridge a bird flew up,
 Seen by the cow-boy as he scrambled down
 To reach the misty dewberry. Let us stoop
 And seek its nest. The brook we need not dread,—
 'T is scarcely deep enough a bee to drown,
 As it sings harmless o'er its pebbly bed.
 —Aye, here it is ! Stuck close beside the bank,
 Beneath the bunch of grass that spindles rank
 Its husk-seeds tall and high : 't is rudely planned
 Of bleached stubbles and the withered fare
 That last year's harvest left upon the land,
 Lined thinly with the horse's sable hair.
 Five eggs, pen-scribbled o'er with ink their shells,
 Resembling writing scrawls, which Fancy reads
 As Nature's poesy and pastoral spells :
 They are the Yellowhammer's ; and she dwells,
 Most poet like, 'mid brooks and flowery weeds.

* * * *

I question if the great bird-painter, Wilson, or our own Australian ornithologist, Mr. Gould (he is a Berkshire man, I am proud to say), or Audubon, or White of Selborne, or Mr. Waterton himself—and all those careful inquirers into nature are more or less poets, seldom as they have used the conventional language of poetry—I question if any of these eminent writers have ever exceeded the minuteness and accuracy of these birds' nests.

The Poem called "Insects" is scarcely less beautiful.

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,
 And happy units of a numerous herd
 Of playfellows, the laughing summer brings ;
 Mocking the sunshine on their glittering wings,
 How merrily they creep, and run, and fly !
 No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,
 Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose,
 And where they fly for dinner no one knows ;
 The dew-drops feed them not ; they love the shine
 Of noon, whose suns may bring them golden wine.
 All day they're playing in their Sunday dress ;
 When night reposes they can do no less !
 Then to the heath-bell's purple hood they fly,
 And, like to princes in their slumbers, lie

Secure from rain and dropping dews, and all
 On silken beds and roomy painted hall.
 So merrily they spend their summer day,
 Now in the corn-fields, now the new-mown hay,
 One almost fancies that such happy things,
 With coloured hoods and richly-burnished wings,
 Are fairy folk in splendid masquerade
 Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,
 Keeping their joyous pranks a mystery still,
 Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

And as I have said above, other qualities too had supervened. The delicacy of sentiment in the following stanzas bears no touch of the uncultivated peasant.

FIRST LOVE'S RECOLLECTIONS.

First love will with the heart remain
 When all its hopes are by,
 As frail rose-blossoms still retain
 Their fragrance when they die.
 And joy's first dreams will haunt the mind
 With shades from whence they sprung,
 As summer leaves the stems behind
 On which spring's blossoms hung.

Mary ! I dare not call thee dear,
 I've lost that right so long,
 Yet once again I vex thine ear
 With memory's idle song.
 Had time and change not blotted out
 The love of former days,
 Thou wert the first that I should doubt
 Of pleasing with my praise.

When honied tokens from each tongue
 Told with what truth we loved,
 How rapturous to thy lips I clung,
 Whilst nought but smiles reproved.
 But now, methinks if one kind word
 Was whispered in thine ear,
 Thou'dst startle like an untamed bird,
 And blush with wilder fear.

How loth to part, how fond to meet,
 Had we two used to be,
 At sunset with what eager feet
 I hastened unto thee !
 Scarce nine days passed us ere we met,
 In spring, nay, wintry weather ;
 Now nine years' suns have risen and set,
 Nor found us once together.

Thy face was so familiar grown,
Thyself so often by,
A moment's memory when alone
Would bring thee to mine eye.
But now my very dreams forget
That witching look to trace ;
And though thy beauty lingers yet,
It wears a stranger's face.

I felt a pride to name thy name,
But now that pride hath flown ;
My words e'en seem to blush for shame
That own I love thee on.
I felt I then thy heart did share,
Nor urged a binding vow ;
But much I doubt if thou couldst spare
One word of kindness now.

And what is now my name to thee,
Though once nought seemed so dear ?
Perhaps a jest in hours of glee,
To please some idle ear.
And yet like counterfeits with me
Impressions linger on,
Though all the gilded finery
That passed for truth is gone.

Ere the world smiled upon my lays
A sweeter meed was mine ;
Thy blushing look of ready praise
Was raised at every line.
But now methinks thy fervent love
Is changed to scorn severe ;
And songs that other hearts approve,
Seem discord to thine ear.

When last thy gentle cheek I pressed
And heard thee feign adieu,
I little thought that seeming jest
Would prove a word so true.
A fate like this hath oft befall
E'en loftier hopes than ours ;—
Spring bids full many buds to swell,
That ne'er can grow to flowers.

That was John Clare's last volume, published in 1839, and although generously noticed by the press, it did not sell. Perhaps the very imperfections of the earlier works had made a part of their charm. There is a certain pleasure in being called upon to show indulgence to one whose high gifts are indisputable. Besides the complacency always attending a sense of superiority of any kind, it flatters one's self-love most agreeably (I am speaking of readers, not of critics) to be able

to detect and to point out beauties under the veil of defects. Still greater was the pride of being amongst the first discoverers of such endowments. With the novelty, that pleasure vanished. Every child boasts the violet of his own finding, and cherishes and caresses it—while it is fresh ; then it disappears and is no more thought of. Woe to us if so we treat a still tenderer flower !

However, it happened the popularity diminished as the merit increased. The public, usually so just in its ultimate estimate of authors, failed in this particular instance to recognise the strong and honest claim upon a fair and liberal patronage possessed by one who had been taken from his own humble avocation, from the homely work but the certain reward of the plough, to cultivate the always uncertain, and too often barren and unthankful fields of literature. Such, I fear, poor Clare found them. Improvement had come, but with improvement came sickness and anxiety. The little income had soon been found inadequate to the wants of his aged parents, and the demands of an increasing family : for they will marry, these poets ! Poverty overwhelmed him, and sickness—and they who still took a kindly interest in one who had crept so close to the heart of nature in coppice and in field, heard with sorrowful sympathy that the sickness was of the mind.

It has been said that pecuniary difficulties were the real cause of the malady, and that the removal of all anxiety as to the means of living would at once cure the delusions under which he labours, and restore him to his home and to his family. I wish it were so, for I think, if that were true (and certainly the fact ought to be ascertained, as nearly as anything of that nature can be ascertained by medical examination), that they who so benevolently lent their aid to lift him from his original obscurity, would, aided by others of a like spirit, step forward to rescue from a still deeper darkness one whose talents had so well justified their former bounty.

In the meanwhile it is an alleviation to the painful feeling excited by such a narrative to know that the poor poet, perfectly gentle and harmless, enjoys, in the asylum where he is placed, the wise freedom of person and of action which is the triumph of humanity and of science in the present day.

A few years ago he was visited by a friend of mine, himself a poet of the people, who gave me a most interesting account of the then state of his intellect. His delusions were at that time very singular in their character. Whatever he read, whatever recurred to him from his former reading, or happened to be mentioned in conversation, became impressed on his mind as a thing that he had witnessed and acted in. My friend was struck with a narrative of the execution of Charles the First, recounted by Clare, as a transaction that occurred yesterday, and of which he was an eye-witness—a narrative the most graphic and minute, with an accuracy as to costume and manners far exceeding what would probably have been at his command if sane. It is such a lucidity as the disciples of Mesmer claim for clairvoyance. Or he would relate the battle of the Nile and the death of Lord Nelson, with the same perfect keeping, especially as to seamanship, fancying himself one of the sailors who had been in the action, and dealing out nautical phrases with admirable exactness and accuracy, although it is doubtful if he ever saw the sea in his life.

About three years before my friend's visit, Mr. Cyrus Redding went to see him, and has given a very interesting description of the poet, and of his state of mind, in the "English Journal." He says that during his stay he appeared free from all delusion, except once when some allusion was made to prize-fighting, and represents him as regretting the absence of female society, and as continuing to write verse of much merit. I have myself some fragments, written with a pencil, which show all his old power over rhythm.*

* About a hundred years ago, Christopher Smart, seized with a similar malady, confined in a madhouse, and deprived of the use of pen, ink, and paper, contrived to indent his Song of David upon the wainscot with the end of a key. I add three stanzas of this fine poem as a psychological curiosity. Times are changed for the better. John Clare has all encouragement to write as often and as much as he chooses.

He sang of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force,
On which all strength depends ;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes
All period, power, and enterprise,
Commences, reigns, and ends.

[The

Mr. Redding gives several examples of these poems. They are distinguished from those of his earlier days by several differences, especially by the change from the rich level meadows of Northamptonshire to the hill and dale of Epping Forest. Here is one which is said to be reminiscent of his Patty :

Maid of Walkherd meet again
 By the wilding in the glen ;
 By the oak against the door,
 Where we often met before.
 By thy bosom's heaving snow,
 By thy fondness love shall know ;
 Maid of Walkherd meet again
 By the wilding in the glen.
 By thy hand of slender make,
 By thy love I'll ne'er forsake,
 By thy heart I'll ne'er betray,
 Let me kiss thy tears away.
 I will live and love thee ever,
 Love thee and forsake thee never,
 Though far in other lands to be,
 Yet never far from love and thee.

The next specimen has much of his fine observation of natural objects, and his old ~~love of birds~~ breaks through everything :—

The forest meets the blessings of the spring,
 The chestnut throws her sticky buds away,
 And shows her pleasant leaves and snow-white flowers.

* * * *

I've often tried, when tending sheep or cow,
 With bits of grass and peels of oaten straw,
 To whistle like the birds. The thrush would start
 To hear her song of praise, and fly away ;
 The blackbird never cared, but sang again ;

The world, the clustering spheres he made,
 The glorious light, the soothing shade,
 Dale, champaign, grove, and hill ;
 The multitudinous abyss,
 Where Secresy remains in bliss,
 And Wisdom hides her skill.

Tell them I Am, Jehovah said,
 To Moses ; whilst earth heard in dread,
 And smitten to the heart,
 At once above, beneath, around,
 All Nature, without voice or sound,
 Replied, O Lord, Thou art !

Devotional poetry has nothing grander even in Milton.

The nightingale's pure song I could not try.
And when the thrush would mock her song, she paused,
And sang another song no bird could do ;
She sang when all were done, and beat them all.
I've often sat, and watched them half the day
Behind the hedgerow thorn or bullace-tree ;
I thought how nobly I would act in crowds,
The woods and fields were all the books I knew,
And every leisure thought was love or fame.

There is some intention, I believe, of publishing a volume of these poems. It will be interesting on many accounts, and, for the sake of the poet and of his family, I heartily wish it every success.

We cannot, I repeat, do too much for John Clare ; he has a claim to it as a man of genius suffering under the severest visitation of Providence. But let us beware of indulging ourselves by encouraging the class of pseudo-peasant poets who spring up on every side, and are amongst the most pitiable objects in creation. One knows them by sight upon the pathway, from their appearance of vagrant misery—an appearance arising from the sense of injustice and of oppression under which they suffer, the powerless feeling that they have claims which the whole world refuses to acknowledge, a perpetual and growing sense of injury. It is a worse insanity than John Clare's, and one for which there is no asylum. Victims to their own day-dreams are they ! They have heard of Burns and of Chatterton ; they have a certain knack of rhyming, although even that is by no means necessary to such a delusion ; they find an audience whom their intense faith in their own power conspires to delude ; and their quiet, their content, their every prospect is ruined for ever. It is this honest and unconquerable persuasion of their own genius that makes it impossible to reason with or convince them. Their faith in their own powers—their racking sense of the injustice of all about them, makes one's heart ache. It is impossible for the sternest or the sturdiest teller of painful truths to disenchant them ; and the consequence is as obvious as it is miserable. For that shadow every substance is foregone. They believe poetry to be their work, and they will do no other. Then comes utter poverty. They haunt the alehouse, they drink, they sicken, they starve. I have known many such.

Happily there is one cure, not for individual cases, but for

the entire class—a slow but a sure remedy. Let the sunlight in, and the night-phantoms vanish. Education, wide and general, not mere learning to read, but making discreet and wise use of the power, and the nuisance will be abated at once and for ever. Let our peasants become as intelligent as our artisans, and we shall have no more prodigies, no more martyrs.

—optimum

XI.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

A COUNTRY WEDDING—MY FIRST VISIT TO LONDON.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Most undoubtedly I was a spoilt child. When I recollect certain passages of my thrice-happy early life, I cannot have the slightest doubt about the matter, although it contradicts all foregone conclusions, all nursery and schoolroom morality, to say so. But facts are stubborn things. Spoilt I was. Everybody spoilt me, most of all the person whose power in that way was greatest—the dear papa himself. Not content with spoiling me in-doors, he spoilt me out. How well I remember his carrying me round the orchard on his shoulder, holding fast my little three-year-old feet, whilst the little hands hung on to his pig-tail, which I called my bridle (those were days of pig-tails), hung so fast, and tugged so heartily that sometimes the ribbon would come off between my fingers, and send his hair floating, and the powder flying down his back. That climax of mischief was the crowning joy of all. I can hear our shouts of laughter now.

Nor were these my only rides. This dear papa of mine, whose gay and careless temper all the professional etiquette of the world could never tame into the staid gravity proper to a doctor of medicine, happened to be a capital horseman; and, abandoning the close carriage, which, at that time, was the regulation conveyance of a physician, almost wholly to my mother, used to pay his country visits on a favourite blood-mare, whose extreme docility and gentleness tempted him, after certain short trials round our old course, the orchard, into having a pad constructed, perched upon which I might occasionally accompany him, when the weather was favourable,

and the distance not too great. A groom, who had been bred up in my grandfather's family, always attended us ; and I do think that both Brown Bess and George liked to have me with them almost as well as my father did. The old servant, proud, as grooms always are, of a fleet and beautiful horse, was almost as proud of my horsemanship ; for I, cowardly enough, Heaven knows, in after-years, was then too young and too ignorant for fear—if it could have been possible to have had any sense of danger when strapped so tightly to my father's saddle, and inclosed so fondly by his strong and loving arm. Very delightful were those rides across the breezy Hampshire downs on a sunny summer morning ; and grieved was I when a change of residence from a small town to a large one, and going among strange people, who did not know our ways, put an end to this perfectly harmless, if somewhat unusual pleasure.

But the dear papa was not my only spoiler. His example was followed, as bad examples are pretty sure to be, by the rest of the household. My maid Nancy, for instance, before we left Hampshire, married a young farmer ; and nothing would serve her but I must be bridesmaid ! And so it was settled.

She was married from her own home, about four miles from our house, and was to go to her husband's after the ceremony. I remember the whole scene as if it were yesterday ! how my father took me himself to the churchyard-gate, where the procession was formed, and how I walked next to the young couple hand-in-hand with the bridegroom's man, no other than the village blacksmith, a giant of six feet three, who might have served as a model for Hercules. Much trouble had he to stoop low enough to reach down to my hand ; and many were the rustic jokes passed upon the disproportioned pair, who might fitly have represented Brobdignag and Lilliput. My tall colleague proved, however, as well-natured as giants commonly are everywhere but in fairy tales, and took as good care of his little partner as if she had been a proper match for him in age and size.

In this order, followed by the parents on both sides, and a due number of uncles, aunts, and cousins, we entered the church, where I held the glove with all the gravity and importance proper to my office ; and so contagious is emotion, and so accustomed was I to sympathise with Nancy, that

when the bride cried, I could not help crying for company. But it was a love-match, and between smiles and blushes Nancy's tears soon disappeared, and so by the same contagion did mine. The happy husband helped his pretty wife into her own chaise-cart, my friend the blacksmith lifted me in after her, and we drove gaily to the large comfortable farmhouse where her future life was to be spent.

It was a bright morning in May, and I still remember, when we drove up to the low wall which parted the front garden from the winding village road, the mixture of affection and honest pride which lighted up the face of the owner. The square, substantial brick house, covered with a vine, the brick porch garlanded with honeysuckles and sweetbriar, the espalier apple-trees on either side the path in full flower, the double row of thrift with its dull pink bloom, the stocks and wallflowers under the window, the huge barns full of corn, the stacks of all shapes and sizes in the rick-yard, cows and sheep and pigs and poultry, told a pleasant tale of rural comfort and rural affluence.

The bride was taken to survey her new dominions by her proud bridegroom ; and the blacksmith, finding me, I suppose, easier to carry than to lead, followed close upon their steps, with me in his arms.

Nothing could exceed the good-nature of my country beau ; he pointed out bantams and pea-fowls, and took me to see a tame lamb and a tall, staggering calf, born that morning ; but for all that, I do not think I should have submitted so quietly to the indignity of being carried,—I, who had ridden thither on Brown Bess, and was at that instant filling the ostensible place of bridesmaid,—if it had not been for the chastening influence of a little touch of fear. Entering the poultry-yard, I had caught sight of a certain turkey-cock, who erected that circular tail of his, and swelled out his deep-red comb and gills after a fashion familiar to that truculent bird, but which up to the present hour I am far from admiring. A turkey at Christmas, well roasted, with bread-sauce, may have his merits ; but if I meet him alive in his feathers, especially when he swells them out and sticks up his tail, I commonly get out of his way even now, much more sixty years ago. So I let the blacksmith carry me.

Then we went to the dairy, so fresh and cool and clean—

glittering with cleanliness ! overflowing with creamy riches ! and there I had the greatest enjoyment of my whole day, the printing with my own hands a pat of butter, and putting it up in a little basket covered with a vine leaf, to take home the dear mamma's tea. Then we should have gone to the kitchen, the back kitchen, the brewhouse, the washhouse, and the rest of the bride's new territories, but this part of the domicile was literally too hot to hold us ; the cooking of the great wedding dinner was in full activity, and the bridegroom himself was forced to retreat before his notable mother, who had come to superintend all things for the day.

So back we drew to the hall, a large square bricked apartment, with a beam across the ceiling, a wide yawning chimney, and wooden settles with backs to them ; where many young people being assembled, and one of them producing a fiddle, it was agreed to have a country-dance until dinner should be ready, the bride and bridegroom leading off, and I following with the bridegroom's man.

Oh, the blunders, the confusion, the merriment of that country-dance ! No two people attempted the same figure ; few aimed at any figure at all ; each went his own way : many stumbled ; some fell, and everybody capered, laughed, and shouted at once. My partner prudently caught me up in his arms again, for fear of my being knocked down and danced over, which, considering some of the exploits of some of the performers, seemed by no means impossible, and would have been a worse catastrophe than an onslaught of the turkey-cock.

A summons to dinner put an end to the glee. Such a dinner ! The plenty of Camacho's wedding was but a type of my Nancy's. Fish from the great pond, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, boiled fowls and a gammon of bacon, a green goose and a sucking pig, plum puddings, apple pies, cheese-cakes and custards, formed a part of the bill of fare, followed by home-brewed beer and home-made wine, by syllabub, and by wedding cake. Everybody ate enough for four, and there was four times more than could by any possibility be eaten. I have always thought it one of the strongest proofs of sense and kindness in my pretty maid, that she rescued me from the terrible hospitality of her mother-in-law, and gave me back unscathed into my father's hands, when about three o'clock he arrived to reclaim me.

The affluence and abundance of that gala day—the great gala of a lifetime—in that Hampshire farmhouse, I have never seen surpassed.

This was my first appearance as a bridesmaid. My next, which took place about a twelvemonth after, was of a very different description.

A first cousin of my father, the daughter of his uncle and guardian, had by the death of her mother's brother, become a wealthy heiress: and leaving her picturesque old mansion in Northumberland, Little Harle Tower, a true border keep overhanging the Warsbeck, for a journey to what the Northumbrians of that day emphatically called "the South," came after a season in London to pass some months with us. At our house she became acquainted with the brother of a Scotch Duke, an Oxford student, who, passing the long vacation with his mother, had nothing better to do than to fall in love. Each had what the other wanted—the lady money, the gentleman rank; and as his family were charmed with the match, and hers had neither the power nor the wish to oppose it, everything was arranged with as little delay as lawyers, jewellers, coachmakers, and mantua-makers, would permit.

How the first step in the business, the inevitable and awful ceremonial of a declaration of love and a proposal of marriage, was ever brought about, has always been to me one of the most unsolvable of mysteries—an enigma without the word.

Lord Charles, as fine a young man as one should see in a summer's day, tall, well made, with handsome features, fair capacity, excellent education, and charming temper, had an infirmity which went nigh to render all these good gifts of no avail: a shyness, a bashfulness, a timidity most painful to himself, and distressing to all about him. It is not uncommon to hear a quiet, silent man of rank, unjustly suspected of pride and haughtiness; but there could be no such mistake here—his shamefacedness was patent to all men. I myself, a child not five years old, one day threw him into an agony of blushing, by running up to his chair in mistake for my papa. Now I was a shy child, a very shy child, and as soon as I arrived in front of his Lordship, and found that I had been misled by a resemblance of dress, by the blue coat and buff waistcoat, I first of all crept under the table, and then flew to hide my face in my mother's lap; my poor fellow-sufferer,

too big for one place of refuge, too old for the other, had nothing for it but to run away, which, the door being luckily open, he happily accomplished.

That a man with such a temperament, who could hardly summon courage to say "How d'ye do?" should ever have wrought himself up to the point of putting the great question, was wonderful enough; that he should have submitted himself to undergo the ordeal of what was called in those days a public wedding, is more wonderful still.

Perhaps the very different temper of the lady may offer some solution to the last of these riddles; perhaps (I say it in all honour, for there is no shame in offering some encouragement to a bashful suitor) it may assist us in expounding them both.

Of a certainty, my fair cousin was pre-eminently gifted with those very qualities in which her lover was deficient. Everything about her was prompt and bright, cheerful and self-possessed. Nearly as tall as himself, and quite as handsome, it was of the beauty that is called showy—a showy face, a showy figure, a showy complexion. We felt at a glance that those radiant, well-opened hazel eyes had never quailed before mortal glance, and that that clear round cheek, red and white like a daisy, had never been guilty of a blush in its whole life. Handsome as she was, it was a figure that looked best in a riding-habit, and a face that of all head-dresses best became a beaver hat; just a face and figure for a procession; she would not have minded a coronation: on the contrary, she would have been enchanted to have been a queen-regnant; but as a coronation was out of the question, she had no objection, taking the publicity as a part of the happiness, to a wedding as grand as the resources of a country town could make it.

So a wedding procession was organized, after the fashion of Sir Charles Grandison, comprising the chief members of each family, especially of the ducal one: an infinite number of brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, cousins and clansfolk, friends and acquaintances, all arranged in different carriages, according to their rank; ladies, gentlemen, servants, and horses, decorated with white and silver favours, in so long a line that it extended from Colney Avenue to St. Mary's Church. The first carriage, a low phaeton, drawn by ponies

led by grooms, containing three children, two of five and six years old, niece and nephew of the bridegroom, who, with myself (already a lady of experience in that line), were to officiate as bride-maidens and bridegroom's man ; the last, also an open carriage, with only the bride and my dear papa, who gave her away.

How well I recollect the crowd of the street, the crowd of the churchyard, the crowd of the church ! There was no crying at this wedding though ; no crying, and far fewer smiles.

The young couple proceeded to Bath and Clifton from the church door ; and the rest of the procession returned to our house to eat bridecake, drink to the health of the new-married pair, and be merry at their leisure ; after which many dispersed, but the members of the two families and the more intimate friends remained to dinner : and in the confusion of preparing to entertain so large a party, the servants, even those belonging to the nursery, were engaged in different ways, and we children left to our own devices, and finding nearly the whole house free to our incursions, betook ourselves to a game at hide and seek.

Now in honour of the day, and of the grand part we had filled in the grand ceremony of the morning, we small people had been arrayed in white from top to toe ; Master Martin in a new suit of jean, richly braided, his sister and myself in clear muslin frocks, edged with lace, and long Persian sashes, the whole width of the silk, fringed with silver, whilst all parties, little boys and little girls, had white beaver hats and heavy ostrich plumes. We young ladies had, as a matter of course, that instinctive respect for our own finery which seems an innate principle in womankind ; moreover, we were very good children, quiet, orderly, and obedient. Master Martin, on the other hand, our elder by a year, had some way or other imbibed the contempt at once for fine clothes and for the authorities of the nursery, which is not uncommon amongst his rebellious sex ; so, the first time it fell to his lot to hide, he ensconced himself in the very innermost recesses of the coalhole, from which delightful retirement he was dragged, after a long search, by his own maid, who had at last awakened from the joys of gossiping and making believe to help in the housekeeper's room, to the recollection that Lady Mary might possibly inquire after her children. The

state of his apparel and of her temper may be more easily imagined than described. He, Duke's grandson though he were, looked like nothing better or worse than a chimney-sweeper. She stormed like a fury. But, as all the storming in the world would not restore the young gentleman or his bridal suit to their pristine state of cleanliness, she took wit in her anger and put him to bed, as a measure partly of punishment, partly of concealment ;—the result of which was that he, the culprit, thoroughly tired with excitement and exercise, with play and display, and well stuffed with dainties to keep him quiet, was consigned to his comfortable bed, whilst we, pattern little girls, had to undergo the penalty of making our appearance and our curtsies in the drawing-room, amongst all the fine folks of *our* Camacho's wedding, and to stay there, weariest of the many weary, two or three hours beyond our accustomed time. With so little justice are the rewards and punishments of this world distributed—even in the nursery !

Not long after this, I made my first visit to London, under the auspices and in company of the dear papa. Business called him thither in the middle of July, and he suddenly announced his intention of driving me up in his gig—such was the then word for a high, open carriage holding two persons!—unencumbered by any other companion, male or female. George only, the old groom, was sent forward with a spare horse over-night to Maidenhead Bridge (ah ! that charming inn is un-inn'd now-a-days by the railways !), and the dear papa conforming to my nursery hours, we dined at Cranford Bridge (I dare say that that hotel, with its pretty garden and its Portugal laurels, has disappeared also), and reached Hatchett's Hotel, Piccadilly (the New White Horse Cellar of the old stage-coaches), early in the afternoon. There a steady, civil barmaid undertook the care of me during our stay ; but, as he had foreseen, I was too much awake and alive with novelty and amusement, too strong in my happiness, to want anybody to take care of me except the dear papa himself.

I had enjoyed the drive past all expression, chattering all the way, and falling into no other mistakes than those common to larger people than myself, of thinking that London began at Brentford, and wondering in Piccadilly, when the crowd would go by ; and I was so little tired when we arrived,

that, to lose no time, we betook ourselves that night to the Haymarket Theatre, the only one then open. I had been at plays in the country, in a barn in Hampshire, and at a regular theatre at our new home ; and I loved them dearly, with that confiding and uncritical pleasure which is the wisest and the best. But the country play was nothing to the London play, a lively comedy, with the rich cast of those days—one of the comedies that George III. enjoyed so heartily. I enjoyed it as much as he, and laughed and clapt my hands, and danced on my father's knee, and almost screamed with delight ; so that a party in the same box, who had begun by being half angry at my restlessness, finished by being amused with my amusement.

The next day, my father, having an appointment at the Bank, took the opportunity of showing me St. Paul's and the Tower.

At St. Paul's, I saw all the wonders of the place—whispered in the whispering-gallery, and walked up the tottering wooden stairs, not into the ball itself, but to the circular balustrade of the highest gallery beneath it. I have never been there since, but I can still recall most vividly that wonderful panorama, the strange diminution produced by the distance, the toylike carriages and horses, and men and women moving noiselessly through the toylike streets ; and (although not frightened then) still more vividly do I recall the dangerous state of the decaying stairs, the swaying rope to hold by, the light showing through the crevices of the wood. My father held me carefully by the hand, and I have no recollection of having felt the slightest fear ; nevertheless, the impression of danger must have been very great, since, for many years of my life, falling through *those* stairs was my bad dream, the dream that gives such sure warning of physical ill, when fever is impending, or any derangement occurs in the system. Then we proceeded to the Tower, that place so striking by force of contrast ; its bright lights and strong shadows ; the jewels, the armour, the armoury, glittering in stern magnificence amidst the gloom of the old fortress ; and the stories of great personages imprisoned, beheaded, buried within its walls—a dreary thing it seemed to be a Queen ! But at night I went to Astley's, and I forgot the sorrows of Lady Jane Grey and Anne Boleyn in the wonders of the horsemanship and the

tricks of the clown. After all, Astley's, although very well in its way, was not the play, and we agreed that the next night, the last we were to spend in London, we would go again to the Haymarket.

Into that last day we crowded all the sight-seeing possible; the Houses of Lords and Commons, where I sat upon the woolsack and in the Speaker's chair, about the smallest person, I suppose, that ever filled those eminent seats. Then Westminster Abbey, where, besides the glorious old building and the tombs, figured at that time certain figures in waxwork—Queen Anne and Queen Elizabeth, as ugly as life, and General Monk, holding out his cap for money. I remember my father giving me a shilling to drop in, as our share of the contribution, and my wondering what became of it. (Are those figures in existence now? and does the General still hold forth the eleemosynary cap?). Thence we proceeded to Cox's Museum, in Spring Gardens, and saw and heard a little bird, who seemed made of diamonds and rubies, who clapt its wings and sang. There too (it was a place full of strange deceptions) I sate down upon a chair, and the cushion forthwith began to squeak like a cat and kittens—so like a cat and kittens, that I more than half expected to be scratched. And then to the Leverian Museum, in the Blackfriars Road, a delightful abode of birds and butterflies; where I saw, dead, and stuffed with a reality that wanted nothing but life, nearly all the beautiful creatures that little girls see now alive at the Zoological. The promised visit to the Haymarket Theatre formed a fit conclusion to this day of enchantment. We saw another capital comedy (I think Colman's "Heir-at-Law"), capitally acted, and laughed until we could laugh no longer. And then, the next day, we drove home, without a moment's weariness of mind or body.

Such was my first journey to London.

Upon looking back to that journey of nearly sixty years ago, what strikes me most is the small dimensions to which the capital of England was then confined, compared with those which it now covers. When I stood on the topmost gallery of St. Paul's, I saw a compact city, spreading along the river, it is true, from Billingsgate to Westminster, but clearly defined to the north and to the south; the West End beginning at Hyde Park Corner, and bordered by Hyde Park on the one side, and the Green Park on the other. Then, in spite of my

mistaking the stones of Brentford for the stones of London, Belgravia was a series of pastures, and Paddington a village. New squares and terraces are closing round the terminus of the Great Western, and the stateliest mansions of the metropolis cover the green fields which separated Sloane Street from Pimlico. People wonder at the size of the Great Exhibition ; but the town of which it forms a part, that great throbbing heart of a great nation, seems to me more wonderful far. To describe London as it is, or even in a few pages to enumerate the sights which we should show to a child now, would be as impossible a task as to crowd into the same space the marvels contained in Mr. Paxton's wonderful house of glass.

Far more impossible ! for a very few lines would comprise the chief impression produced upon me when, escorted by my excellent friend, Mr. Lucas, and guided by the fine taste of that most tasteful of painters, I walked through the Great Exhibition this summer. Next, perhaps, to the building itself, with the statues and hangings to which it owes its distinctive character, and the fountains and people who give to it movement and life,—next to the vastness, the lightness, the exquisite fitness of the building,—and excepting, perhaps, only that triumph of modern sculpture, Kiss's bold, expressive, impassioned group,—that which most filled the eye and the mind seemed to me to be the Indian tissues, however called, with their delicious harmony of colour, and their strange power of interweaving the precious metals with their silken textures. There is one shawl where, upon a white ground, the same pattern is repeated, now in gold and now in silver, which seems to me actually to emit light. Those Indian draperies are poems which have no need of words—poems invented thousands of years ago, and repeated from dynasty to dynasty, from empire to empire. So are those Tunisian vases, forms of ineffable grace, such as may have been carried to the fountain or the well by the captive queens of Grecian fable, or the Hebrew maidens of sacred history. Is it that those ancient nations of the East and of the South have in them the great principle of permanence which is a sort of earthly immortality—that having once seized the Beautiful, they are content to abide by it, and to produce and reproduce the same grace of form and harmony of colour, just as Nature herself is con-

*Ros.
on
City*

*Nature
Art*

tent to produce and reproduce her marvels of vegetable life, her lotus on the river, her magnolia in the wood ? If so, let us strive to copy them, not in such a combination of hues, or such lines of contour, but in the greater wisdom of loving and admiring beauty because it is beautiful, and not because, according to the caprice of the hour, it happens to be new or to be old.

It is now full time to come to Dr. Johnson.

The London which I saw sixty years ago was not materially different from that in which he had lived and reigned—the king of conversation, and almost of literature. One proof of this supremacy was afforded at that very time, when my father, by no means a bookish man, and a most ardent Whig, stopped the coach two or three times, during our drive to the Bank, to show me Bolt-court, and various other courts distinguished by the residence of the great lexicographer. Boswell's inimitable life had, of course, its share in this interest ; but, independently of that remarkable book, the feeling was deep and was general : and when we consider that the society of which he was the acknowledged head comprised such names as Burke and Fox and Reynolds and Goldsmith, we cannot doubt but, in spite of his virulent prejudices, his absurd superstition, and his latinized English, Samuel Johnson was not only a good man but a great man.

One who was pre-eminently both, Dr. Channing, Republican by nation and opinion, Unitarian by creed, has a passage relating to Johnson, which, while alleging nearly all that can be said against him, always struck me as admirable for justice and for candour—the candour of an adversary and an opponent. It occurs in a “Review of the Writings and Character of Milton,” in which the American author had, as a matter of course, controverted the decisions of the English critic. He says—I omit much that relates only to Milton—he says :—

“ We wish not to disparage Johnson. We could find no pleasure in sacrificing one great man to the *manes* of another. He did not and he could not appreciate Milton. We doubt whether two other minds, having so little in common as those of which we are now speaking, can be found in the higher walks of literature. Johnson was great in his own sphere, but that sphere was comparatively of the earth, whilst Milton's was only inferior to that of angels. It was customary in

the day of Johnson's glory to call him a giant, to class him with a mighty but still an earth-born race. Milton we should rank among seraphs. Johnson's mind acted chiefly on man's actual condition, on the realities of life, on the springs of human action, on the passions which now agitate society, and he seems hardly to have dreamed of a higher state of the human mind than was then exhibited. *** In religion, Johnson was gloomy and inclined to superstition, and on the subject of government leaned to absolute power, and the idea of reforming either never entered his mind but to disturb and provoke it. How could Johnson be just to Milton ? The comparison which we have instituted has compelled us to notice Johnson's defects ; but we trust we are not blind to his merits. His stately march of style, his pomp and power of language, his strength of thought, his reverence for virtue and religion, his vigorous logic, his practical wisdom, his insight into the springs of human action, and the solemn pathos which occasionally pervades his descriptions of life and his references to his own history, command our willing admiration. That he wanted enthusiasm and creative imagination and lofty sentiment was not his fault. We do not blame him for not being Milton. We would even treat what we deem the faults of Johnson with a tenderness approaching respect ; for they were results to a degree which man cannot estimate of a diseased, irritable, nervous, unhappy, physical temperament, and belonged to the body more than to the mind."

So far the great American. Would that all critics had his charity !

In none of Dr. Channing's praises of Johnson do I join more cordially than in the admiration with which he speaks of his occasional references to his own history. I subjoin the letter to Lord Chesterfield which comprises so many of the distinguishing characteristics of his style, together with a pungency, a truth, and a pathos, which belong even more to personal character than to literary power. It explains itself :—

“ MY LORD,

“ I have lately been informed by the proprietor of ‘The World,’ that two papers in which my Dictionary is recom-

mended to the publick were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

“ When upon some slight encouragement I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address ; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*, that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending ; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all I could ; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

“ Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door ; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

“ The Shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

“ Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help ? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it ; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

“ Having carried on my work, therefore, with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less ; for

I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

“ My Lord,

“ Your Lordship’s most humble,

“ Most obedient Servant,

“ SAMUEL JOHNSON.”

My concluding extract is of a very different description—as different as the character and situation of the two persons to whom the letter and the stanzas relate. These verses again tell their own story, though they do not tell the whole, for Johnson, poor himself, was to the poor apothecary a generous patron and an unfailing friend. The poem has much of the homely pathos, the graphic truth of Crabbe, and is so free from manner, that it might rather pass for his than for Dr. Johnson’s.

ON THE DEATH-BED OF ROBERT LEVETT.

Condemned to Hope’s delusive mine,

As on we toil from day to day,

By sudden blast or slow decline

Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,

See Levett to the grave descend

Officious, innocent, sincere,

Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills Affection’s eye

Obscurely wise and coarsely kind,

Nor lettered arrogance deny

Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature called for aid,

And hovering Death prepared the blow,

His vigorous remedy displayed

The power of Art without the show.

In misery’s darkest caverns known,

His ready help was ever nigh,

Where helpless anguish poured his groan,

And lonely want retired to die.

No summons mocked by chill delay,

No petty gains disdained by pride;

The modest wants of every day,

The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walked their narrow round,

Nor made a pause, nor left a void;

And sure the Eternal Master found,

His single talent well employed.

The busy day, the peaceful night,
 Unfelt, uncounted, glided by ;
 His fame was firm, his powers were bright,
 Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no throbs of fiery pain,
 No cold gradations of decay ;
 Death broke at once the vital chain,
 And freed his soul the nearest way.

XII.

OLD POETS.

ROBERT HERRICK—GEORGE WITHER.

NOTHING seems stranger in the critics of the last century than their ignorance of the charming lyrical poetry of the times of the early Stuarts and the Commonwealth. One should think that the songs of the great dramatists, whose genius they did acknowledge—Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ben Jonson—might have prepared them to recognise the kindred melodies of such versifiers as Marlowe and Raleigh, and Wither and Marvell. His Jacobite prejudices might have predisposed Dr. Johnson in particular to find some harmonious stanzas in the minstrels of the cavaliers, Lovelace and the Marquis of Montrose. But so complete is the silence in which the writers of that day pass over these glorious songsters, that it seems only charitable to suppose that these arbiters of taste had never met with their works. With the honourable exceptions of Thomas Warton and Bishop Percy, there is not a critic from Johnson downward, who does not cite Waller as the first poet who smoothed our rugged tongue into harmonious verse. And the prejudice lingers still in places where one does not expect to find it. The parish clerk of Beaconsfield is by no means the only, although by far the most excusable authority who, standing bare-headed before his pyramidal tomb in the churchyard, assured me with the most honest conviction that Waller was the earliest and finest versifier in the language.

Herrick is one of the many whose lyrics might be called into court to overturn this verdict. Originally bred to the bar, he took orders at a comparatively late period, and ob-

tained a living in Devonshire, from which he fled during the strict rule of the Lord Protector, concealing himself under a lay habit in London, and returning to his parsonage with the return of the monarch, whose birth had formed the subject of one of his earliest pastorals.

More than any eminent writer of that day Herrick's collection requires careful sifting: but there is so much fancy, so much delicacy, so much grace, that a good selection would well repay the publisher. Bits there are that are exquisite: as when in enumerating the cates composing "Oberon's Feast" in his "Fairyland," he includes, amongst a strange farrago of unimaginable dishes,

"The broke heart of a nightingale
O'ercome in music."

Some of his pieces, too, contain curious illustrations of the customs, manners, and prejudices of our ancestors. I shall quote one or two from the division of the *Hesperides* that he calls "charms and ceremonies," beginning with the motto:—

DIVINATION BY A DAFFODIL.

When a daffodil I see,
Hanging down his head toward me,
Guess I may what I may be:
First, I shall decline my head;
Secondly, I shall be dead;
Lastly, safely buried.

The adorning the houses with evergreens seems then to have been as common as our own habit of decking them with flowers:—

CEREMONIES FOR CANDLEMAS EVE.

Down with rosemary and bays,
Down with the mistletoe,
Instead of holly now upraise
The greener box for show.

The holly hitherto did sway;
Let box now domineer,
Until the dancing Easter day
Or Easter's Eve appear.

Then youthful box, which now has grace
Your houses to renew,
Grown old, surrender must his place
Unto the crisped yew.

When yew is out, then birch comes in
 And many flowers beside,
 Both of a fresh and fragrant kin
 To honour Whitsuntide.

Green rushes then and sweetest bents,
 With cooler oaken boughs,
 Come in for comely ornaments
 To re-adorn the house.

Thus times do shift ; each thing his turn does hold,
 New things succeed as former things grow old.

THE BELLMAN.

From noise of scare-fires rest ye free,
 From murders Benedicite ;
 From all mischances that may fright
 Your pleasing slumbers in the night,
 Mercy secure ye all, and keep
 The goblin from ye while ye sleep.
 Past one o'clock, and almost two,
 My masters all, good day to you !

The description of a steer in one of his "Bucolics," is graphic and life-like. The herdswoman is lamenting the loss of her favourite :—

I have lost my lovely steer,
 That to me was far more dear
 Than these kine that I milk here ;
 Broad of forehead, large of eye,
 Party-coloured like a pie,
 Smooth in each limb as a die ;
 Clear of hoof, and clear of horn,
 Sharply pointed as a thorn ;
 With a neck by yoke unworn,
 From the which hung down, by strings,
 Balls of cowslip, daisy rings
 Interlaced by ribbonings.
 Faultless every way for shape,
 Not a straw could him escape ;
 Ever gamesome as an ape,
 But yet harmless as a sheep,
 Pardon, Lacon, if I weep.

But his real delight was amongst flowers and bees, and nymphs and cupids; and certainly these graceful subjects were never handled more gracefully :—

THE CAPTIVE BEE.

As Julia once a slumbering lay,
 It chanced a bee did fly that way,
 After a dew or dew-like shower,
 To tipple freely in a flower.

For some rich flower he took the lip
 Of Julia and began to sip ;
 But when he felt he sucked from thence
 Honey, and in the quintessence,
 He drank so much he scarce could stir,
 So Julia took the pilferer.
 And thus surprised, as filchers use,
 He thus began himself to excuse :
 " Sweet lady-flower ! I never brought
 Hither the least one thieving thought ;
 But, taking those rose-lips of yours
 For some fresh fragrant luscious flowers,
 I thought I there might take a taste
 Where so much syrup ran at waste.
 Besides, know this, I never sting
 The flower that gives me nourishing ,
 But with a kiss of thanks do pay
 For honey that I bear away."
 This said, he laid his little scrip
 Of honey 'fore her ladyship ;
 And told her, as some tears did fall,
 That that he took, and that was all.
 At which she smiled, and bade him go
 And take his bag ; but thus much know,
 When next he came a pilfering so,
 He should from her full lips derive
 Honey enough to fill his hive.

THE BAG OF THE BEE.

About the sweet bag of a bee
 Two Cupids fell at odds ;
 And whose the pretty prize should be,
 They vowed to ask the gods.
 Which, Venus hearing, thither came,
 And for their boldness stript them ;
 And taking thence from each his flame,
 With rods of myrtle whipt them.
 Which done, to still their wanton cries
 When quiet grown she 'd seen them,
 She kissed and wiped their dove-like eyes,
 And gave the bag between them.

TO THE WILLOW TREE.

Thou art to all lost love the best,
 The only true plant found,
 Wherewith young men and maids, distrest
 And left of love are crowned.
 When once the lover's rose is dead
 Or laid aside forlorn,
 Then willow garlands 'bout the head,
 Edewed with tears are worn.

When with neglect, the lover's bane,
 Poor maids rewarded be
 For their love lost ; their only gain
 Is but a wreath from thee.
 And underneath thy cooling shade,
 When weary of the light,
 The love-spent youth and love-sick maid
 Come to weep out the night.

* * * *

THE FUNERAL RITES OF THE ROSE.

The rose was sick, and smiling died ;
 And being to be sanctified,
 About the bed there sighing stood
 The sweet and flowery sisterhood.
 Some hung the head, while some did bring,
 To wash her, water from the spring ;
 Some laid her forth while others wept,
 But all a solemn fast there kept.
 The holy sisters some among
 The sacred dirge and trental sung ;
 But ah ! what sweets smelt everywhere
 As heaven had spent all perfumes there !
 At last, when prayers for the dead
 And rites were all accomplished,
 They, weeping, spread a lawny loom,
 And closed her up as in a tomb.

SONG.

Gather ye rosebuds, while ye may,
 Old Time is still a flying ;
 And this same flower that smiles to-day,
 To-morrow will be dying.
 The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
 The higher he's a getting,
 The sooner will his race be run,
 The nearer he's to setting.
 The age is best which is the first,
 When youth and blood are warmer ;
 But, being spent, the worse and worse
 Times still succeed the former.
 Then be not coy, but use your time,
 And, whilst ye may, go marry ;
 For having lost but once your prime,
 You may for ever tarry.

TO MEADOWS.

Ye have been fresh and green,
 Ye have been filled with flowers ;
 And ye the walks have been,
 Where maids have spent their hours.

Ye have beheld where they
 With wicker arks did come ;
 To kiss and bear away
 The richer cowslips home.

You 've heard them sweetly sing,
 And seen them in a round ;
 Each virgin like the spring,
 With honeysuckles crowned.

But now we see none here,
 Whose silvery feet did tread ;
 And, with dishevelled hair,
 Adorned this smoother mead.

Like unthrifts, having spent
 Your stock, and needy grown,
 You 're left here to lament
 Your poor estates alone.

TO DAFFODILS.

Fair daffodils, we weep to see,
 You haste away so soon ;
 As yet the early rising sun
 Has not attained its noon.

Stay, stay,
 Until the hasting day
 Has run,
 But to the even-song,
 And, having prayed together, we
 Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
 We have as short a spring ;
 As quick a growth to meet decay
 As you or any thing.

We die,
 As your hours do, and dry
 Away,
 Like to the summer's rain,
 Or, as the pearls of morning dew,
 Ne'er to be found again.

THE NIGHT-PIECE.—TO JULIA.

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
 The shooting stars attend thee ;
 And the elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow
 Like the sparks of fire, befriend theo.

No will-o'-th'-wisp mislight thee ;
 Nor snake nor slow-worm bite thee ;
 But on, on thy way,
 Not making a stay,
 Since ghost there is none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber,
 What though the moon doth slumber ?
 The stars of the night
 Will lend thee their light
 Like tapers clear without number.

TO BLOSSOMS.

Fair pledges of a faithful tree,
 Why do ye fall so fast ?
 Your date is not so past
 But you may yet stay here awhile
 To blush and gently smile,
 And go at last.

What were ye born to be
 An hour or half's delight,
 And so to bid good-night ?
 'T was pity Nature brought ye forth,
 Merely to show your worth,
 And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
 May read how soon things have
 Their end, though ne'er so brave ;
 And after they have shown their pride,
 Like you, awhile they glide
 Into the grave.

The want in these graceful and delicate lyrics is thew and sinew. And yet they are what they pretend to be—airy petals of the cherry-blossom, hinting of fruit, bees fluttering and musical, giving token of honey.

The Muse fares ill in civil contentions. As Herrick fled before the Roundheads, so was George Wither oppressed by the Cavaliers. The following noble praise of poetry was written in a prison: in a prison the poor poet passed many of his latter years, and it is still a question whether he actually died in confinement, or perished of want and misery after his release.

But, alas ! my muse is slow ;
 For thy pace she flags too low.
 But though for her sake I am crost,
 Though my best hopes I have lost,
 And knew she would make my trouble
 Ten times more than ten times double ;
 I would love and keep her too
 Spite of all the world could do.
 For though banished from my flocks,
 And confined within these rocks,
 Here I waste away the light,
 And consume the sullen night ;

She doth for my comfort stay,
And keeps many cares away.
Though I miss the flowery fields,
And those sweets the spring-tide yields ;
Though I may not see those groves,
Where the shepherds chant their loves,
And the lasses more excel
Than the sweet-voiced Philomel ;
Though of all those pleasures past
Nothing now remains at last,
But remembrance, poor relief
That more makes than mends my grief ;
She's my mind's companion still
Maugre Envy's evil will :
Whence she should be driven too,
Were't in mortal's power to do.
She doth tell me where to borrow
Comfort in the midst of sorrow ;
Makes the desolatest place
In her presence be a grace ;
And the blackest discontents
Be her fairest ornaments.
In my former days of bliss
Her divine skill taught me this,
That from everything I saw
I could some invention draw ;
And raise Pleasure to her height
Through the meanest object's sight :
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least bough's rustling ;
By a daisy, whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
On a shady bush or tree
She could more infuse in me
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man.
By her help I also now
Make this churlish place allow
Some things, that may sweeten gladness
In the very gall of sadness :
The dull loneliness, the black shade
That these hanging vaults have made,
The strange music of the waves
Beating on these hollow caves,
This black den, which rocks emboss
Overgrown with eldest moss ;
The rude portals that give light
More to terror than delight ;
This my chamber of neglect
Walled about with disrespect ;
From all these, and this dull air
A fit object for despair,

She hath brought me by her might
 To draw comfort and delight.
 Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,
 I will cherish thee for this !
 Poetry, thou sweet'st content
 That e'er Heaven to mortals lent ;
 Though they as a trifle leave thee
 Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee ;
 Though thou be to them a scorn
 That for nought but earth are born ;
 Let my life no longer be
 Than I am in love with thee !
 Though our wise ones call it madness,
 Let me never taste of gladness
 If I love not thy maddest fits
 Above all their greatest wits !
 And though some, too seeming holy,
 Do account thy raptures folly,
 Thou dost teach me to contemn
 What makes knaves and fools of them !

“The praises of poetry have been often sung in ancient and modern times ; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors ; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged : but before Wither no one had celebrated its power *at home* ; the wealth and strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor.” This fine criticism, worthy of the poetry which it celebrates, is by Charles Lamb.

XIII.

FEMALE POETS.

JOANNA BAILLIE.* —CATHERINE FANSHAW.

BELOVED, admired, appreciated by the best spirits of her time, it is with no little triumph that I, who plead guilty to some of that *esprit de corps* which may be translated into

* Since writing this paper, this gifted authoress and admirable woman has passed from this world to the higher and happier state which was ever in her thoughts. A letter from her to a mutual friend, written a very few days before her death, expresses her satisfaction in having received the sacrament with her sister the Sunday previous. In this letter, for the first time during a long correspondence, she breaks off somewhat suddenly, complaining of bodily fatigue, although no one then thought her ill.

“pride of sex,” write the name of our great female dramatist—of the first woman who won high and undisputed honours in the highest class of English poetry. The pleasure of rendering her a faint and imperfect justice is all the greater that I have the honour of claiming acquaintance with this most gifted person, and that she is in her domestic relations the very pattern of what a literary lady should be—quiet, unpretending, generous, kind, admirable in her writings, excellent in her life.

And yet of Mrs. Joanna Baillie, the praised of Scott and of all whose praise is best worth having for half a century, what can I say, but that many an age to come will echo back their applause!

Her tragedies have a boldness and a grasp of mind, a firmness of hand, and resonance of cadence, that scarcely seem within the reach of a female writer; whilst the tenderness and sweetness of her heroines—the grace of the love-scenes—and the trembling outgushings of sensibility, as in *Orra*, for instance, in the fine tragedy on Fear—would seem exclusively feminine, if we did not know that a true dramatist—as Shakespeare or Fletcher—has the wonderful power of throwing himself, mind and body, into the character that he portrays. That Mrs. Joanna is a true dramatist, as well as a great poet, I, for one, can never doubt, although it has been the fashion to say that her plays do not act.

It must be above fifty years ago that I, then a girl of thirteen, in company with my old and dear friend, Mr. Harness, the bosom friend of Thomas Hope, the friend and correspondent of Lord Byron (and, be it observed, of all his correspondents, the one who seems to have impressed the daring poet with the most sincere respect), then a boy considerably younger than myself, witnessed the representation of “*De Montfort*,” by John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. Forty years after, we had the pleasure of talking over that representation with the authoress, in Lady Dacre’s drawing-room, a place where poets “most do congregate,” and we both agreed that the impression which the performance had made upon us remained indelible. Now, the qualities in an acted play that fixed themselves upon the minds of children so young, must have been purely dramatic. Purely dramatic, too, are many of the finer traits that strike us in reading, as, when

De Montfort, with his ear quickened by hatred, announces the approach of *Rezenvelt*, and *Freberg* exclaims :—

“How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound !
I hear him not—”

and many others scattered through the tragedies.

I concede, however, very willingly, that Mrs. Joanna is a most charming lyrical poetess ; as witness the beautiful Morning Song in the “Beacon,” which breathes the very spirit of hope :—

Up ! quit thy bower ; late wears the hour ;
Long have the rooks cawed round thy tower ;
On flower and tree loud hums the bee ;
The wilding kid sports merrily :
A day so bright, so fresh, so clear,
Showeth when good fortune’s near.

Up ! lady fair, and braid thy hair,
And bathe thee in the breezy air ;
The rolling stream that soothed thy dream
Is dancing in the sunny beam ;
And hours so sweet, so bright, so gay,
Will waft good fortune on its way.

Up ! time will tell ; the friar’s bell
Its service sound hath chimed well ;
The aged crone keeps house alone,
And reapers to the fields are gone ;
The active day, so fair and bright,
May bring good fortune ere the night.

There is a remarkable freedom in the diction and versification of the following beautiful song ; the more remarkable that it is written for a Welsh air :—

THE BLACK COCK.

Good Morrow to thy sable beak,
And glossy plumage, dark and sleek,
Thy crimson moon and azure eye,
Cock of the heath so wildly shy !
I see thee slowly cowering, through
That wiry web of silver dew,
That twinkles in the morning air,
Like casement of my lady fair.

A maid there is in yonder tower,
Who, peeping from her early bower,
Half shows, like thee, with simple wile
Her braided hair and morning smile.

The rarest things, with wayward will,
Beneath the covert hide them still ;
The rarest things to light of day
Look shortly forth and break away.

One fleeting moment of delight
I warmed me in her cheering sight,
And short, I ween, the time will be
That I shall parley hold with thee.
Through Snowdon's mist red beams the day ;
The climbing herd-boy chants his lay :
The gnat-flies dance their sunny ring ;
Thou art already on the wing.

This song is distinguished by the same delicious freedom, and was also written to music. Truly, the Muse can dance in fetters :—

O welcome bat and owlet grey,
Thus winging low your airy way !
And welcome moth and drowsy fly,
That to mine ear come humming by !
And welcome shadows dim and deep,
And stars that through the pale sky peep ;
O welcome all ! to me ye say
My woodland love is on her way.
Upon the soft wind floats her hair,
Her breath is on the dewy air ;
Her steps are in the whispered sound
That steals along the stilly ground.
O dawn of day, in rosy bower,
What art thou to this witching hour ?
O noon of day, in sunshine bright,
What art thou to this fall of night ?

I cannot resist indulging myself by transcribing the following Scottish ballad, a delightful specimen of quaint archness and quiet humour :—

FY, LET US A' TO THE WEDDING.

(*An Auld Song New Buskit.*)

Fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there ;
For Jock's to be married to Maggie,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

And there will be jibing and jeering,
And glancing of bonny dark een,
Loud laughing, and smooth-gabbit speering
O' questions baith pawky and keen.

And there will be Bessy the beauty,
 Wha raises her cockup sae hie,
 And giggles at preachings and duty,—
 Guid grant that she gang na' ajee !

And there will be auld Geordie Tanner,
 Wha coft a young wife wi' his gowd ;
 She'll flaunt wi' a silk gown upon her,
 But, wow ! he looks dowie and cow'd.

And brown Tibbie Fowler the heiress
 Will perk at the tap o' the ha',
 Encircled wi' suitors, wha's care is
 To catch up her gloves when they fa',
 Repeat a' her jokes as they're cleekit,
 And haver and glower in her face,
 While tocherless mays are negleekit,—
 A crying and scandalous case.

And Maysie, wha's clavering aunty
 Wad match her wi' Lowrie the laird,
 And learns the young fule to be vaunty,
 But neither to spin nor to caird.

And Andrew, wha's granny is yearning
 To see him a clerical blade,
 Was sent to the college for learning,
 And cam' back a coof as he gaed.

And there will be auld Widow Martin,
 That ca's hersel thirty and twa ;
 And thraw-gabbit Madge, wha, for certain,
 Was jilted by Hab o' the Shaw.

And Elspy the sewster sae genty,
 A pattern o' havins and sense,
 Will straik on her mittens sae genty,
 And crack wi' Mess John i' the spence.

And Angus, the seer of fairlies,
 That sits on the stane at his door,
 And tells about bogles, and mair lies
 Than tongue ever uttered before.

And there will be Bauldie the boaster,
 Sae ready wi' hands and wi' tongue ;
 Proud Paty and silly Sam Foster,
 Wha quarrel wi' auld and wi' young.

And Hugh the town-writer, I'm thinking,
 That trades in his lawyerly skill,
 Will egg on the fighting and drinking,
 To bring after-grist to his mill.

And Meggie—ha ! ha ! will be civil,
 And let the wee bridie a-be :
 A vilipend tongue is the devil,
 And ne'er was encouraged by me.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,
 For they will be lilting there,
 Frae mony a far-distant ha'ding,
 The fun and the feasting to share.

For they will get sheep's-head and haggis,
 And browst o' the barley-mow ;
 Even he that comes latest and lag is
 May feast upon dainties enow.

Veal florentines in the o'en baken,
 Weel plenished wi' raisins and fat,
 Beef, mutton, and chuckies, a' taken
 Het reeking frae spit or frae pat.

And glasses (I trow 't is na' said ill),
 To drink the young couple good luck,
 Weel fill'd wi' a braw beechen ladle,
 Frae punch-bowl as big as Dumbuck.

And then will come dancing and daffing,
 And reelin' and crossin' o' han's,
 Till even auld Luckie is laughing,
 As back by the aumry she stan's.

Sic bobbing, and flinging, and whirling,
 While fiddlers are making their din,
 And pipers are droning and skirling,
 As loud as the roar of the linn.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,
 For they will be lilting there,
 For Jock's to be married to Maggie,
 The lass wi' the gowden hair.

CATHERINE FANSHAWE.

It has always seemed to me that one of the happiest positions—let me say, the very happiest position—that a woman of great talent can occupy in our high civilisation, is that of living a beloved and distinguished member of the best literary society ; enjoying, listening, admiring ; repaying all that she receives by a keen and willing sympathy ; cultivating to perfection the social faculty ; but abstaining from the wider field of authorship, even while she throws out here and there such choice and chosen bits as prove that nothing but disinclination to enter the arena debars her from winning the prize. How much better to belong to that portion of the audience which gives fame to the actor—that class of readers to whom the writer looks for reputation—than to figure as actor or as author oneself !

Besides the infinite wisdom of resting in such a position,

*—See me along
autobiography*

he is

seated midway on the hill of Fame, enjoying all the beauties of the prospect, and shielded from the storms of the summit, and the perils of the steep and rocky way,—besides its security, its happiness, and its wisdom, such a choice has always appeared to me indicative of the very finest qualities, mental and moral ;—feminine, modest, generous, pure. I look up to a woman who, with powers to command the most brilliant literary success, contents herself with a warm and unenvying sympathy in the success of others, with a mixture of reverence and admiration greater than I can accord to mere genius, however high. Rare are such women beyond all rareness ; but that they do exist, my friend Miss Goldsmid is a living instance ; and that there was one such most eminent in the last generation, was felt by all who had the happiness and the privilege of knowing Catherine Fanshawe.

The name of this gifted woman is connected with the whole of that glorious society which formed the pride and ornament of London during the early part of the present century—the society which, after a short interregnum, succeeded the illustrious circle that had formed the great literary club in the days of Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Reynolds. Even with these names, their successors may well bear a comparison. To mention them is enough : Scott, Southey, Rogers, Moore, Joanna Baillie, Maria Edgeworth, Madame d'Arblay, Wordsworth, Crabbe, Mrs. Siddons, Sotheby, Sharp, W. R. Spencer, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir James Mackintosh, Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, William Harness, Sydney Smith, Campbell, Canning, Thomas Hope :—there is no telling where to stop. And amongst this society, at once so dazzling and so charming, there was no name more distinguished for brilliant and various talent, or for every attractive quality, than that of Catherine Fanshawe.

Coheiress with two other daughters of an ancient gentleman's family, the three lived together in that happy sisterly union peculiar to our country. Besides her remarkable talent for graceful and polished pleasantry, whether in prose or in verse, Miss Catharine Fanshawe was admirable as a letter-writer, as a reader of Shakespeare, and as a designer in almost every style. One of the few survivors of that brilliant society, himself a first-rate judge of art, says of her :—“ Her drawings and etchings are those of an artist ; and so different are they

in kind, that I have seen a large drawing, called 'The Genius of the Storm,' which, if I were not afraid of my own prepossessions, I should say is sublime ; whilst there are groups of children by her, which no one has ever surpassed for their beauty, simplicity, and truth ; and I have hanging up over my study fireplace a long aqua-tinted etching of hers, called 'An After-dinner Conversation,' which is as comical as anything by Bunbury, and a great deal better than anything of his, because, while quite as humorous, it is less caricatured."

Of course, the secret of this variety, and of this excellence, lay in her power and her habit of observation. "She saw everything," says that excellent friend of hers and of mine, to whom I owe the account of her drawings ; "she saw everything—the *whole of it*," and was only restrained from turning it into the most finished comedy by those feelings of a gentlewoman and a Christian (how nearly those words are synonymous !) which prevented her from running the risk of giving a moment's pain to any human being. I have a theory that the very highest talent commonly keeps very good company ; and no better illustration of its truth could be found than this admirable person, whose Christian graces were quite on a par with her mental endowments.

Far too few of her poems have been published. Those which I subjoin have been taken from a volume, now very scarce, consisting of miscellaneous pieces, by many authors, edited by Mrs. Joanna Baillie, for the benefit of a friend. The volume was published by subscription, and is remarkable not only for these charming pieces of pleasantry, and for some of the best poems of the editor, but as containing Sir Walter Scott's most successful dramatic effort, "Mac Duff's Cross," and Mr. Merivale's "Devon's Poly-Olbion," and also for having introduced to the world Southey's whimsical and characteristic experiment upon rhyme and language, called "The Cataract of Lodore."

I plunge at once into one of the pleasantest of Miss Catherine Fanshawe's poems, "The Abrogation of the Birth-night Ball, by a Beau of the last Century." The description of the minuet is admirable.

For ever at his lordly call
Uprose the spangled night ;
Leading in gorgeous splendour bright
The minuet and the ball.

And balls each frolic hour may bring
 That revels through the maddening spring,
 Shaking with hurried step the painted floor,
 But minuets are no more !

No more the well-taught feet shall tread
 The figure of the mazy zed ;
 The beau of other times shall mourn
 As gone, and never to return,
 The graceful bow, the curtsy low,
 The floating forms that undulating glide,
 (Like anchor'd vessels on the swelling tide,)
 That rise and sink alternate as they go,
 Now bent the knee, now lifted on the toe ;
 The sidelong step that works its even way,
 The slow pas-grave and slower balance ;
 Still with fix'd gaze he eyes the imagined fair
 And turns the corner with an easy air.

Not so his partner. From her tangled train
 To free her captive foot she strives in vain ;
 Her tangled train the struggling captive holds
 (Like great Atrides) in its fatal folds ;
 The laws of gallantry his aid demand,
 The law of etiquette withhold his hand.
 Such pains, such pleasures, now alike are o'er
 And beaus and etiquette shall soon exist no more.

In their stead behold advancing
 Modern men and women dancing !

Step and dress alike express,
 Above, below, from heel to toe,
 Male and female awkwardness,
 Without a hoop, without a ruffle,
 One eternal jig and shuffle.
 Where's the air, and where's the gait ?
 Where's the feather in the hat ?
 Where the frizz'd toupee ? and where,
 Oh ! where's the powder for the hair ?

* * * *

Mark the pair whom favouring fortune
 At the envied top shall place ;
 Humbly they the next importune
 To vouchsafe a little space ;

Not the graceful arm to wave in,
 Or the silken robe expand ;
 All superfluous action saving,
 Idly drops the lifeless hand.

Her downcast eye the modest beauty
 Sends as doubtful of their skill,
 To see if feet perform their duty,
 And their endless task fulfil.

Footing, footing, footing, footing,
 Footing, footing, footing still.
 While the rest, in hedgerow state,
 All insensible to sound,
 With more than human patience wait,
 Like trees fast-rooted in the ground.
 Not such as once, with sprightly motion,
 To distant music stirr'd their stumps,
 And tript from Pelion to the ocean,
 Performing avenues and clumps :
 What time old Jason's ship, the Argo,
 Orpheus fiddling at the helm,
 From Colchis bore her golden cargo,
 Dancing o'er the azure realm.
 But why recur to ancient story,
 Or balls of modern date ?
 Be mine to trace the minuet's fate,
 And mourn its fallen glory.
 To ask who rang the passing bell ?
 If Vestris ran the solemn dirge to hear ?
 Genius of Valoïy, didst thou hover near ?
 Shade of Lepicq ! and spirit of Gondel !
 Now their angry forms arise,
 Where wreaths of smoke involve the skies,
 Above St. James's steeple.
 I heard them curse our heavy heel,
 The Irish step, the Highland reel,
 And all the United People.
 To the dense air the curse adhesive clung,
 Repeated since by many a modish tongue
 In words that may be said, but never shall be sung.*
 What cause untimely urged the minuet's fate ?
 Did war subvert the manners of the state ?
 Did savage nations give the barbarous law,
 The Gaul Cisalpine or the Gonoquaw ?
 Its fall was destined to a peaceful land,
 A sportive pencil and a courtly hand.
 They left a name that time itself might spare
 To grinding organs, and the dancing bear.
 * * * *

My next extract is a restoration. I have it myself, printed in two editions of Lord Byron's works ; the one English, the other American. The friend already quoted says of it,—“ The letter H (I mean the Enigma so called, ascribed to Lord Byron,) she

* “ Go to the devil and shake yourself.” The tune of a favourite country-dance.

wrote at the Deepdene. I well remember her bringing it down at breakfast and reading it to us, and my impression is that she had then just composed it."

A RIDDLE.

'Twas in heaven pronounced, and 'twas mutter'd in hell,
And echo caught faintly the sound as it fell ;
On the confines of earth 'twas permitted to rest,
And the depths of the ocean its presence confess'd ;
'Twill be found in the sphere when 'tis riven asunder,
Be seen in the lightning and heard in the thunder.
'Twas allotted to man with his earliest breath,
Attends him at birth, and awaits him in death,
Presides o'er his happiness, honour, and health,
Is the prop of his house, and the end of his wealth.
In the heaps of the miser 'tis hoarded with care,
But is sure to be lost on his prodigal heir.
It begins every hope, every wish it must bound,
With the husbandman toils, and with monarchs is crown'd.
Without it the soldier, the seaman may roam,
But woe to the wretch who expels it from home !
In the whispers of conscience its voice will be found,
Nor e'en in the whirlwind of passion be drown'd.
'Twill not soften the heart ; but though deaf be the ear,
It will make it acutely and instantly hear.
Yet in shade let it rest, like a delicate flower,
Ah ! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour.

Now for another riddle—a charade—which my fair friends shall have the pleasure of discovering for themselves.

Inscribed on many a learned page,
In mystic characters and sage,
Long time my *First* has stood ;
And though its golden age be past,
In wooden walls it yet may last
Till clothed in flesh and blood.

My *Second* is a glorious prize
For all who love their wandering eyes
With curious sights to pamper ;
But 'tis a sight—which should they meet,
All' improviso in the street,
Ye gods ! how they would scamper !

My *tout* 's a sort of wandering throne,
To women limited alone,
The Salique law reversing ;
But while the imaginary queen
Prepares to act this novel scene,
Her royal part rehearsing,
O'erturning her presumptuous plan,
Up climbs the old usurper—man,
And she jogs after as she can.

It is not often that so trifling a subject has been rendered so graceful and so pleasant as in the following pleadings of two initials, C. *versus* K.

EPISTLE TO EARL HARCOURT,

On his wishing her to spell her name of Catherine with a K.

And can his antiquarian eyes
 My Anglo-Saxon C despise?
 And does Lord Harcourt, day by day,
 Regret the extinct initial K?
 And still, with ardour unabated,
 Labour to get it reinstated?
 I know, my lord, your generous passion
 For every long-exploded fashion;
 And own the Katherine you delight in
 Looks irresistibly inviting,
 Appears to bear the stamp and mark
 Of English used in Noah's Ark:
 "But all that glitters is not gold,"
 Nor all things obsolete are old.
 Would you but take the pains to look
 In Doctor Johnson's quarto book
 (As I did, wishing much to see
 The aforesaid letter's pedigree),
 Believe me 'twould a tale unfold
 Would make your Norman blood run cold.
 My lord, you'll find the K's no better
 Than an interpolated letter—
 A wandering Greek, a franchised alien,
 Derived from Cadmus or Deucalion,
 And, why or wherefore none can tell,
 Inserted 'twixt the I and L.
 The learned say our English tongue
 On Gothic beams is built and hung:
 Then why the solid fabric piece
 With motley ornaments from Greece?
 Her lettered despots had no bowels
 For Northern consonants and vowels;
 The Norman and the Greek grammarian
 Deemed us and all our words barbarian,
 Till those hard words and harder blows
 Had silenced all our haughty foes,
 And proud they were to kiss the sandals
 (Shoes we had none) of Goths and Vandals.

* * * *

But since our Saxon line we trace
 Up to this all-subduing race,
 Who from their "sole dominion" hurled
 The giants of the ancient world,
 Their boasted languages confounding,

And with such mortal gutturals wounding,
 That Greek or Latin fell or fled,
 And soon were numbered with the dead ;
 Befits it us, so much their betters,
 To spell our names with conquered letters ?
 And shall they rise and prate again,
 Like Falstaff from among the slain ?
 A licence quite of modern date
 Which no long customs consecrate ;
 For since this K, of doleful sound,
 First set his foot on British ground,
 'Tis not, as antiquaries know,
 A dozen centuries ago.

That darling theme of English story,
 For learning famed and martial glory,
 Alfred, who quelled the usurping Dane,
 And burst indignant from his chain ;
 Who slaves redeemed to reign o'er men,
 Changing the falchion for the pen,
 Alfred, whom yet these realms obey,
 In all his kingdom owned no K,
 From foreign arms and letters free,
 Preserved his Cyngly dignity,
 And wrote it with a Saxon C.

* * * *

But grant this specious plea prevailing,
 And all my legal learning failing,
 There yet remains so black a charge,
 Not only 'gainst the K's at large,
 But the individual K in question,
 You'd tremble at the bare suggestion,
 Nor ever more a wish reveal
 So adverse to the public weal.

Dear gentle Earl, you little know
 That wish might work a world of woe ;
 The ears that are unborn would rise
 In judgment 'gainst your lordship's eyes ;
 The ears that are unborn would rue
 Your letter patent to renew
 The dormant dignity of *shrew*.
 The K restored takes off the attainder,
 And grants the title, with remainder
 In perpetuity devised
 To Katherines lawfully baptised.
 What has not Shakespeare said and sung
 Of our pre-eminence of tongue !
 His glowing pen has writ the name
 In characters of fire and flame ;
 Not flames that mingle as they rise
 Innocuous with their kindred skies ;
 Some chemic lady-like solution,

Shown at the Royal Institution :
But such as still with ceaseless clamour,
Dance round the anvil and the hammer.
See him the comic muse invoking,
(The merry nymph with laughter choking,)—
While he exhibits at her shrine
The unhallowed form of Katherine ;
And there the Gorgon image plants,—
Palladium of the termagants.
He formed it of the rudest ore
That lay in his exhaustless store,
Nor from the crackling furnace drew,
Which still the breath of genius blew,
Till (to preserve the bright allusion)
The mass was in a state of fusion.
Then cast it in a Grecian mould,
Once modelled from a living scold ;
When from her shelly prison burst
That finished vixen, Kate the curst.
If practice e'er with precept tallies,
Could Shakespeare set down aught in malice ?
From Nature all his forms he drew
And held the mirror to her view ;
And if an ugly wart arose,
Or freckle upon Nature's nose,
He flattered not the unsightly flaw,
But marked and copied what he saw ;
Strictly fulfilling all his duties
Alike to blemishes and beauties :
So that in Shakespeare's time 'tis plain
The Katherines were scolds in grain,
No females louder, fiercer, worse.
Now contemplate the bright reverse ;
And say amid the countless names
Borne by contemporary dames,—
Exotics, fetched from distant nations,
Or good old English appellations,—
Names hunted out from ancient books,
Or found 'mid dairy-maids and cooks,
Genteel, familiar, or pedantic,
Grecian, Roman, or romantic,
Christian, Infidel or Jew,
Heroines, fabulous or true,
Ruths, Rebeccas, Rachels, Sarahs,
Charlettes, Harriets, Emmas, Claras,
Auroras, Helens, Daphnes, Delias,
Martias, Portias and Cornelias,
Nannys, Fannys, Jennys, Hettrys,
Dollys, Mollys, Biddys, Bettys,
Sacharissas, Melusinas,
Dulcibellas, Celestinas,—
Say is there one more free from blame,
One that enjoys a fairer fame,

One more endowed with Christian graces
 (Although I say it to our faces,
 And flattery we don't delight in),
 Than Catherine at this present writing ?
 Where then can all the difference be ?
 Where but between the K and C ?
 Between the graceful curving line
 We now prefix to atherine,
 Which seems to keep in mild police,
 Those rebel syllables in peace,
 Describing in the line of duty
 Both physical and moral beauty.
 And that impracticable K
 Who led them all so much astray ?
 Was never seen in black and white
 A character more full of spite !
 That stubborn back, to bend unskilful,
 So perpendicularly wilful !
 With angles hideous to behold
 Like the sharp elbows of a scold,
 In attitude, when words shall fail
 To fight their battles tooth and nail.

In page the first you're sagely told
 That "all that glitters is not gold ;"
 Fain would I quote one proverb more,—
 "N'éveillez pas le chat qui dort."
 Here some will smile as if suspicious
 The simile was injudicious,
 Because in C A T they trace
 Alliance with the feline race.
 But we the name alone inherit,
 C has the letter, K the spirit ;
 And woe betide the man who tries,
 Whether or no the spirit dies !
 Though dormant long, it yet survives
 With its full complement of lives ;
 The nature of the beast is still
 To scratch and claw if not to kill ;
 For royal cats to low-born wrangling
 Will superadd the gift of strangling.
 Witness in modern times the fate
 Of that unhappy potentate,
 Who from his palace near the Polc
 Where the chill waves of Neva roll,
 Was snatched, while yet alive and merry,
 And sent on board old Charon's ferry,
 The Styx he traversed execrating
 A Katherine of his own creating.

* * * *

In evil hour this simple Czar,
 Impelled by some malignant star,

Bestowed upon his new Czarina
 The fatal name of Katerina ;
 And as Monseigneur l'Archevêque
 Chose to baptize her à la Grecque,
 'T was Katerina with a K :
 He rue'd it to his dying day.
 Nay, died, as I observed before,
 The sooner on that very score.
 The Princess quickly learnt her cue,
 Improved upon the part of shrew,
 And as the plot began to thicken,
 She wrung his head off like a chicken ;
 In short, this despot of a wife
 Robbed the poor man of crown and life ;
 And robbing Peter paid not Paul,
 But cleared the stage of great and small.

* * * *

Besides these genial pleasantries, many shorter poems on local and temporary subjects enlivened the brilliant circle of which Miss Catherine Fanshawe formed so precious an ornament. Many have perished, as occasional verses will perish, however happy. I insert one specimen to show how her lively fancy could embellish the merest trifle.

When the Regent's Park was first laid out, she parodied the two well-known lines from Pope's "Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady :"

"Here shall the spring its earliest sweets bestow,
 Here the first roses of the year shall blow,"

and by only altering one word of the first line, and a single letter of the second, changed their entire meaning, and rendered them applicable to the new resort of the Londoners :

"Here shall the spring its earliest *coughs* bestow,
 Here the first *noses* of the year shall blow."

One wonders what Pope would have thought of such a parody. It is really a great honour. But would he have thought so ?

XIV.

MARRIED POETS.

my son Charles
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.—ROBERT BROWNING.

MARRIED poets ! Charming words are these, significant of congenial gifts, congenial labours, congenial tastes ;—quiet and sweet resources of mind and of heart, a long future of happiness live in those two words. And the reality is as rare as it is charming. Married authors we have had of all ages and of all countries ; from the Daciers, standing stiff and stately under their learning, as if it were a load, down to the Guizots, whose story is so pretty that it would sound like a romance to all who did not know how often romance looks pale beside reality ; from the ducal pair of Newcastle, walking stately and stiff under their strawberry-leaved coronets, to William and Mary Howitt, ornaments of a sect to whom coronets are an abomination. Married authors have been plentiful as blackberries, but married poets have been rare indeed ! The last instance, too, was rather a warning than an example. When Caroline Bowles changed her own loved and honoured name, to become the wife of the great and good man Robert Southey, all seemed to promise fairly, but a slow and fatal disease had seized him even before the wedding-day, and darkened around him to the hour of his death. In the pair of whom I am now to speak, the very reverse of this sad destiny has happily befallen, and the health of the bride, which seemed gone for ever, has revived under the influence of the climate of Italy, of new scenes, new duties, a new and untried felicity.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning is too dear to me as a friend to be spoken of merely as a poetess. Indeed, such is the influence of her manners, her conversation, her temper, her thousand sweet and attaching qualities, that they who know her best are apt to lose sight altogether of her learning and of her genius, and to think of her only as the most charming person that they have ever met. But she is known to so few, and the peculiar characteristics of her writings,—their purity,

their tenderness, their piety, and their intense feeling of humanity and of womanhood,—have won for her the love of so many, that it will gratify them, without, I trust, infringing on the sacredness of private intercourse, to speak of her not wholly as a poetess, but a little as a woman. When in listening to the nightingale, we try to catch a glimpse of the shy songster, we are moved by a deeper feeling than curiosity.

My first acquaintance with Elizabeth Barrett commenced about fifteen years ago. She was certainly one of the most interesting persons that I had ever seen. Everybody who then saw her said the same; so that it is not merely the impression of my partiality, or my enthusiasm. Of a slight, delicate figure, with a shower of dark curls falling on either side of a most expressive face, large tender eyes, richly fringed by dark eyelashes, a smile like a sunbeam, and such a look of youthfulness, that I had some difficulty in persuading a friend, in whose carriage we went together to Chiswick, that the translatress of the "Prometheus" of *Æschylus*, the authoress of the "Essay on Mind," was old enough to be introduced into company, in technical language was *out*. Through the kindness of another invaluable friend, to whom I owe many obligations, but none so great as this, I saw much of her during my stay in town. We met so constantly and so familiarly that, in spite of the difference of age, intimacy ripened into friendship, and after my return into the country, we corresponded freely and frequently, her letters being just what letters ought to be—her own talk put upon paper.

The next year was a painful one to herself and to all who loved her. She broke a blood-vessel upon the lungs which did not heal. If there had been consumption in the family, that disease would have supervened. There were no seeds of the fatal English malady in her constitution, and she escaped. Still, however, the vessel did not heal, and, after attending her for above a twelvemonth at her father's house in Wimpole Street, Dr. Chambers, on the approach of winter, ordered her to a milder climate. Her eldest brother, a brother in heart and in talent worthy of such a sister, together with other devoted relatives, accompanied her to Torquay, and there occurred the fatal event which saddened her bloom of youth, and gave a deeper hue of thought and feeling, especially of devotional feeling, to her poetry. I have so often been asked

what could be the shadow that had passed over that young heart, that, now that time has softened the first agony, it seems to me right that the world should hear the story of an accident in which there was much sorrow, but no blame.

Nearly a twelvemonth had passed, and the invalid, still attended by her affectionate companions, had derived much benefit from the mild sea-breezes of Devonshire. One fine summer morning, her favourite brother, together with two other fine young men, his friends, embarked on board a small sailing vessel, for a trip of a few hours. Excellent sailors all, and familiar with the coast, they sent back the boatmen, and undertook themselves the management of the little craft. Danger was not dreamt of by any one—after the catastrophe no one could divine the cause; but, in a few minutes after their embarkation, and in sight of their very windows, just as they were crossing the bar, the boat went down, and all who were in her perished. Even the bodies were never found. I was told by a party who were travelling that year in Devonshire and Cornwall, that it was most affecting to see on the corner houses of every village street, on every church-door, and almost on every cliff, for miles and miles along the coast, handbills, offering large rewards for linen cast ashore, marked with the initials of the beloved dead; for it so chanced that all the three were of the dearest and the best—one, I believe, an only son, the other the son of a widow.

This tragedy nearly killed Elizabeth Barrett. She was utterly prostrated by the horror and the grief, and by a natural but a most unjust feeling that she had been, in some sort, the cause of this great misery. It was not until the following year that she could be removed in an invalid carriage, and by journeys of twenty miles a day, to her afflicted family and her London home. The house that she occupied at Torquay had been chosen as one of the most sheltered in the place. It stood at the bottom of the cliffs, almost close to the sea; and she told me herself that, during that whole winter, the sound of the waves rang in her ears like the moans of one dying. Still she clung to literature and to Greek; in all probability she would have died without that wholesome diversion to her thoughts. Her medical attendant did not always understand this. To prevent the remonstrances of her friendly physician, Dr. Barry, she caused a small edition of Plato to be

so bound as to resemble a novel. He did not know, skilful and kind though he were, that to her such books were not an arduous and painful study, but a consolation and a delight.

Returned to London, she began the life which she continued for so many years, confined to one large and commodious but darkened chamber, admitting only her own affectionate family and a few devoted friends (I, myself, have often joyfully travelled five-and-forty miles to see her, and returned the same evening, without entering another house); reading almost every book worth reading, in almost every language, and giving herself heart and soul to that poetry of which she seemed born to be the priestess.

Gradually her health improved. About four years ago she married Mr. Browning, and immediately accompanied him to Pisa. They then settled at Florence; and this summer I have had the exquisite pleasure of seeing her once more in London, with a lovely boy at her knee, almost as well as ever, and telling tales of Italian rambles, of losing herself in chestnut forests, and scrambling on mule-back up the sources of extinct volcanoes. May Heaven continue to her such health and such happiness!

In her abundant riches, it is difficult to select extracts. If I did not know her scorn of her own earlier works (for she was the most precocious of authoresses, wrote largely at ten years old, and more than well at fifteen)—if I were not aware of her fastidiousness, I should be tempted to rescue certain exquisite stanzas which I find printed at the end of her first version of the “Prometheus Bound”—for, dissatisfied with her girlish translation of the grand old Greek, she recommenced her labour, and went fairly through the drama from the first line to the last; but she has condemned the poem, and therefore I refrain.

Perhaps there is some personal preference in the selection I do make; since I first received it written in her own clear and beautiful manuscript on the fly-leaf of another volume, which she has also withdrawn from circulation. Besides being one of the earliest, it is amongst the most characteristic of her smaller poems.

THE SEAMEW.

How joyously the young seamew
Lay dreaming on the waters blue,

Whereon our little bark had thrown
A forward shade, the only one,
(But shadows aye will men pursue.)

Familiar with the waves, and free
As if their own white foam were he;
His heart upon the heart of ocean
Lay learning all its mystic motion
And throbbing to the throbbing sea.

And such a brightness in his eye,
As if the ocean and the sky
Within him had lit up and nurst
A soul God gave him not at first
To comprehend their mystery.

We were not cruel, yet did sunder
His white wing from the blue waves under,
And bound it;—while his fearless eyes
Looked up to ours in calm surprise,
As deeming us some ocean wonder.

We bore our ocean bird unto
A grassy place where he might view
The flowers that curtsy to the bees,
The waving of the tall green trees,
The falling of the silver dew.

The flowers of earth were pale to him
Who had seen the rainbow fishes swim;
And when earth's dew around him lay
He thought of ocean's wingéd spray,
And his eye waxéd pale and dim.

The green trees round him only made
A prison with their darksome shade:
And drooped his wing and mournéd he
For his own boundless glittering sea,—
Albeit he knew not they could fade.

Then One her gladsome face did bring,
Her gentle voice's murmuring,
In ocean's stead his heart to move,
And teach him what was human love—
He thought it a strange mournful thing.

He lay down in his grief to die,
(First looking to the sea-like sky
That hath no waves,) because, alas!
Our human touch did o'er him pass,
And with our touch, our agony.

Perhaps the very finest of Mrs. Browning's poems is "The Lady Geraldine's Courtship," written (to meet the double exigency of completing the uniformity of the original two volumes, and of catching the vessel that was to carry the

proofs to America) in the incredible space of twelve hours. That delicious ballad must have been lying unborn in her head and in her heart ; but when we think of its length and of its beauty, the shortness of time in which it was put into form appears one of the most stupendous efforts of the human mind. And the writer was a delicate woman, a confirmed invalid, just dressed and supported for two or three hours from her bed to her sofa, and so back again. Let me add, too, that the exertion might have been avoided by a new arrangement of the smaller poems, if Miss Barrett would only have consented to place "Pan is Dead" at the end of the first volume instead of the second. The difference does not seem much ; but she had promised Mr. Kenyon that "Pan is Dead" should conclude the collection ; and Mr. Kenyon was out of town, and could not release her word. To this delicate conscientiousness we owe one of the most charming love-stories in any language. It is too long for insertion here ; and I no more dare venture an abridgement than I should venture to break one of the crown jewels. So the Dead Pan shall take the place. It were mere pedantry to compare Schiller's "Gods of Greece" to this glorious gallery of classical statues, fresh and life-like, as if just struck into beauty by the chisel of Phidias.

I transcribe Mrs. Browning's own modest and graceful introduction :—

THE DEAD PAN.

"Excited by Schiller's 'Götter Griechenlands,' and partly founded on a well-known tradition, mentioned in a treatise of Plutarch ('De Oraculorum Defectu'), according to which, at the hour of the Saviour's agony, a cry of 'Great Pan is Dead !' swept across the waves, in the hearing of certain mariners, and the oracles ceased.

"It is in all veneration to the memory of the deathless Schiller, that I oppose a doctrine still more dishonouring to poetry than to Christianity.

"As Mr. Kenyon's graceful and harmonious paraphrase of the German poem was the first occasion of my turning my thoughts in this direction, I take advantage of the pretence to indulge my feelings (which overflow on other grounds), by inscribing my lyric to that dear friend and relative, with the

earnestness of appreciating esteem as well as of affectionate gratitude.—E. B. B."

Gods of Hellas ! gods of Hellas !
 Can ye listen in your silence ?
 Can your mystic voices tell us
 Where ye hide ? In floating islands
 With a wind that evermore
 Keeps you out of sight of shore ?
 Pan, Pan is dead.

In what revels are ye sunken
 In old Æthiopia ?
 Have the Pygmies made you drunken,
 Bathing in Mandragora
 Your divine pale lips, that shiver
 Like the lilies in the river ?
 Pan, Pan is dead.

Do ye sit there still in slumber,
 In gigantic Alpine rows ?
 The black poppies out of number,
 Nodding, dripping from your brows
 To the red lees of your wine,
 And so kept alive and fine ?
 Pan, Pan is dead.

Or lie crushed your stagnant corses
 Where the silver spheres roll on,
 Stung to life by centric forces,
 Thrown like rays out from the sun !
 While the smoke of your old altars
 Is the shroud that round you welters ?
 Great Pan is dead.

" Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas !"
 Said the old Hellenic tongue,
 Said the hero-oaths, as well as
 Poet's songs the sweetest sung !
 Have ye grown deaf in a day ?
 Can ye speak not yea or nay—
 Since Pan is dead ?

Do ye leave your rivers flowing
 All alone, O Naiades !
 While your drenched locks dry slow in
 This cold feeble sun and breeze ?
 Not a word the Naiads say
 Though the rivers run for aye,—
 For Pan is dead.

From the glooming of the oak-wood,
 O, ye Dryads, could ye flee ?
 At the rushing thunder-stroke, would

No sob tremble through the tree ?
 Not a word the Dryads say,
 Though the forests wave for aye.
 For Pan is dead.

Have ye left the mountain places,
 Oreads wild for other tryst ?
 Shall we see no sudden faces
 Strike a glory through the mist ?
 Not a sound the silence thrills
 Of the everlasting hills.

Pan, Pan is dead

O, twelve gods of Plato's vision
 Crowned to starry wanderings,—
 With your chariots in procession
 And your silver clash of wings.
 Very pale ye seem to rise,
 Ghosts of Grecian deities,

Now Pan is dead.

Jove ! that right hand is unloaded,
 Whence the thunder did prevail.
 While in idiocy of godhead
 Thou art staring, the stars pale !
 And thine eagle blind and old
 Roughs his feathers in the cold.

Pan, Pan is dead.

Where, O Juno ! is the glory
 Of thy regal look and tread ?
 Will they lay for evermore, thee
 On thy dim straight golden bed ?
 Will thy queendom all lie hid
 Meekly under either lid ?

Pan, Pan is dead.

Ha, Apollo ! Floats his golden
 Hair, all mist-like where he stands ;
 While the Muses hang enfolding
 Knee and foot with faint wild hands.
 'Neath the clanging of thy bow
 Niobe looked lost as thou !

Pan, Pan is dead.

Shall the casque with its brown iron
 Pallas' broad blue eyes eclipse,
 And no hero take inspiring
 From the God-greek of her lips ?
 'Neath her olive dost thou sit,
 Mars the mighty, cursing it ?

Pan, Pan is dead.

Bacchus, Bacchus ! on the Panther
 He swoons, bound with his own vines !
 And his Mænads slowly saunter,

Head aside among the pines,
While they murmur dreamingly,
Evohe—ah—evohe !

Ah, Pan is dead.

Neptune lies beside his trident,
Dull and senseless as a stone :
And old Pluto, deaf and silent,
Is cast out into the sun.
Ceres smiles stern thereat,
We *all* now are desolate—

Now Pan is dead.

Aphrodite ! dead and driven
As thy native foam thou art ;
With the cestus long done heaving
On the white calm of thine heart !
At Adonis ! At that shriek
Not a tear runs down her cheek—

Pan, Pan is dead.

And the doves we used to know from
One another—huddled lie
Frone as taken in a snow-storm
Close beside her tenderly,—
As if each had weakly tried
Once to kiss her ere he died.

Pan, Pan is dead.

What, and Hermes ? Time enthralleth
All thy cunning. Hermes, thus,—
And the ivy blindly crawlleth
Round thy brave caduceus ?
Hast thou no new message for us
Full of thunder and Jove's glories ?
Nay ! Pan is dead.

Crownèd Cybele's great turret
Rocks and crumbles on her head :
Roar the lions of her chariot
Toward the wilderness unfed :
Scornful children are not mute,—
“ Mother, mother, walk afoot,—
Since Pan is dead.”

In the fiery-hearted centre
Of the solemn Universe,
Ancient Vesta,—who could enter
To consume thee with this curse ?
Drop thy grey chin on thy knee,
O, thou palsied Mystery !
For Pan is dead.

Gods ! we vainly do adjure you,—
Ye return nor words nor sign :
Not a votary could sec~~re~~ you

Even a grave for your Divine !
 Not a grave to show thereby
Here those grey old gods do lie.
 Pan, Pan is dead.

Even that Greece who took your wages
 Calls the Obolus outworn,
 And the hearse deep-throated ages
 Laugh your godships unto scorn—
 And the poets do disclaim you
 Or grow colder if they name you—
 And Pan is dead.

Gods bereavèd, gods belated,—
 With your purples rent asunder !
 Gods discrowned and desecrated,—
 Disinherited of thunder !
 Now the goats may climb and crop
 The soft grass on Ida's top—
 Now Pan is dead

Calm of old, the bark went onward,
 When a cry more loud than wind
 Rose up, deepened, and swept sunward,
 From the piled Dark behind :
 And the sun shrank and grew pale
 Breathed against by the great wail—
 “ Pan, Pan is dead.”

And the rowers from the benches
 Fell, each shuddering on his face—
 While departing Influences
 Struck a cold back through the place :
 And the shadow of the ship
 Reeled along the passive deep—
 Pan, Pan is dead.

I have no room for the rest ; but I must find a place for
 one exquisite stanza ;—

O, ye vain false gods of Hellas,
 Ye are silent evermore !
 And I dash down this old chalice
 Whence libations ran of yore.
 See ! the wind crawls in the dust
 Worm-like—as your glories must !
 Since Pan is dead.

The last edition of Mrs. Browning's poems closes with
 three-and-forty sonnets from the Portuguese—glowing with
 passion, melting with tenderness. True love was never more
 fitly sung :—

What can I give thee back, O liberal
 And princely giver ! . . . who hast brought the gold
 And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
 And laid them on the outside of the wall
 For such as I to take or leave withal
 In unexpected largesse ? Am I cold,
 Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
 High gifts I render nothing back at all ?
 Not so. Not cold !—but very poor instead !
 Ask God, who knows ! for frequent tears have run
 The colours from my life, and left so dead
 And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
 To give the same as pillow to thy head.
 Go farther ! Let it serve to trample on.

There is a deep truth in this which follows :—

Yet love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
 And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright
 Let temple burn or flax ! An equal light
 Leaps in the flame from cedar plant or weed.
 And love is fire : and when I say at need,
I love thee—mark !—*I love thee !* in thy sight
 I stand transfigured, glorified aright
 With conscience of the new rays that proceed
 Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
 In love, when love the lowest : meanest creatures
 Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
 And what I *feel*, across the inferior features,
 Of what I *am* doth flash itself, and show
 How that great *work of love* enhances Nature's.

The same visit to London that brought me acquainted with my beloved friend, Elizabeth Barrett, first gave me a sight of Mr. Browning. It was at a period that forms an epoch in the annals of the modern drama—the first representation of “Ion.”

I had the honour and pleasure of being the inmate of Mr. and Mrs. Serjeant Talfourd (my accomplished friend has since worthily changed his professional title—but his higher title of poet is indelible) ; having been, I believe, amongst the first who had seen that fine play in manuscript. The dinner-party consisted merely of Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Landor, and I think Mr. Forster. By a singular coincidence it was our host's birthday ; and no one present can forget the triumph of the evening—a triumph of no common order as regarded the number, the quality, or the enthusiasm of the audience ; the boxes being crammed to the ceiling, and the pit filled, as in an elder day, with critics and gentlemen.

A large party followed the poet home to supper, a party comprising distinguished persons of almost every class ; lawyers, authors, actors, artists, all were mingled around that splendid board ; healths were drunk and speeches spoken, and it fell to the lot of the young author of "Paracelsus" to respond to the toast of "The Poets of England." That he performed this task with grace and modesty, and that he looked still younger than he was, I well remember ; but we were not introduced, and I knew him only by those successive works which redeemed the pledge that "Paracelsus" had given, until this very summer, when going to London purposely to meet my beloved friend, I was by her presented to her husband. Ah ! I hope it will not be fifteen years before we look each other in the face again !

I never see those two volumes of his collected works which correspond so prettily with the last edition of Mrs. Browning's poems—a sort of literary twins—without wishing again and again, and again, that we had actors and a stage. Besides "The Blot on the Scutcheon" which has been successfully produced at two metropolitan theatres, "Colombe's Birthday" and "Luria" show not only what he has done, but what with the hope of a great triumph before him he might yet do as a dramatist. I could show what I mean by transcribing the last act of "Colombe's Birthday." I could make my meaning clearer still by transcribing the whole play. But as these huge borrowings are out of the question, I must limit myself to a couple of dramatic lyrics, each of which tells its own story :—

MY LAST DUCHESS.—FERRARA.

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive ; I call
That piece a wonder now ; Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her ? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you but I),
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there ; so not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek : perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps

Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint
 Half-flush that dies along her throat;" such stuff
 Was courtesy she thought; and cause enough
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had
 A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
 Too easily imprest; she liked whate'er
 She look'd on, and her looks went everywhere.
 Sir, 'twas all one! my favour at her breast
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,
 The bough of cherries some officious fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
 She rode with round the terrace—all and each
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
 Or blush at least. She thanked men—good; but thanked
 Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
 My gift of a nine-hundred years old name
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
 In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say: "Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me;—here you miss
 Or there exceed the mark;" and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
 Her wits to yours forsooth and make excuse,
 —E'en then would be some stooping, and I chuse
 Never to stoop. Oh, Sir, she smiled no doubt
 Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands,
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
 The company below, then. I repeat
 The Count your master's known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
 Together down, Sir! Notice Neptune though
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me.

Poor dead Duchess! and poor living one too! for that complaisant Ambassador who listened so silently would hardly give warning, even if the father were likely to take it; and we feel as they walk down the Palace stairs that another victim comes.

The pathos of the next lyric is of a different order.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX.

[16—.]

I sprang to the stirrup, and Ioris and he;
 I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;

"Good speed!" cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew
 "Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
 Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
 And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other: we kept the great pace
 Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
 I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
 Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,
 Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit,
 Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting, but while we drew near
 Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
 At Boom a great yellow star came out to see;
 At Düsseldorf 'twas morning as plain as could be;
 And from Mechelm church-steeple we heard the half chime,
 So Ioris broke silence with " Yet there is time!"

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
 And against him the cattle stood black every one,
 To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
 And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
 With resolute shoulders, each butting away
 The haze as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
 For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
 And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
 O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
 And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
 His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Ioris, "Stay spur!
 Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her
 We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick wheeze
 Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees.
 And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
 As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Ioris and I,
 Past Loos and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
 The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
 'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;
 Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
 And "Gallop," gasped Ioris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
 Rolled neck and crop over, lay dead as a stone;
 And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
 Of the news, which alone could save Aix from her fate,
 With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
 And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,
 Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
 Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
 Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer ;
 Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise bad or good,
 Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round,
 As I sat with his head twixt my knees on the ground,
 And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
 As I poured down his throat one last measure of wine,
 Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
 Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

Although we have cause to hope that the good steed recovered, yet his trial of speed and strength is too painful to conclude with. I add a few lines from the "Englishman in Italy," a long poem, so pulpy, so juicy, so full of bright colour and of rich detail, that it is just like a picture by Rubens. Selection is difficult—but I choose the passage in question because its exceeding truth was first pointed out to me by Mr. Ruskin.

But to-day not a boat reached Salerno,
 So back to a man
 Came our friends with whose help in the vineyards
 Grape-harvest began :
 In the vat half-way up on our house-side
 Like blood the juice spins,
 While your brother all bare-legged is dancing
 Till breathless he grins,
 Dead beaten in effort on effort
 To keep the grapes under,
 Since still when he seems all but master
 In pours the fresh plunder
 From girls who keep coming and going
 With basket on shoulder—

* * * *

Meanwhile see the grape-bunch they've brought you,—
 The rain water slips
 O'er the heavy blue bloom on each globe,
 Which the wasp to your lips
 Still follows with fretful persistence—
 Nay taste while awake
 This half of a curd-white smooth cheese-ball,
 That peels flake by flake
 Like an onion's each smoother and whiter ;
 Next sip this weak wine
 From the thin green glass flask with its stopper
 A leaf of the vine—

And end with the prickly pear's red flesh,
 That leaves through its juice
 The stony black seeds on your pearl teeth—

and so on.



XV.

PROSE PASTORALS.

THE LOST CANE. *good*

SIR PHILIP SYDNEY'S ARCADIA.—ISAAC WALTON'S COMPLETE ANGLER.

DURING this warm summer, and above all during this dry burning harvest weather, which makes my poor little roadside cottage (the cottage which for that reason, amongst others, I am about to leave) so insupportable from glare, and heat, and dust in the fine season, I have the frequent, almost daily habit of sallying forth into the charming green lane, the grassy, turf, shady lane of which I have before made mention, and of which I share the use and the enjoyment with the gipsies. Last summer I was able to walk thither, but in the winter I was visited by rheumatism and cannot walk so far without much heat and fatigue; so my old pony-phaeton conveys me and my little maid, and my pet dog Fanchon, and my little maid's needlework of flounces and fineries, and my books and writing-case, as far as the road leads, and sometimes a little farther; and we proceed to a certain green hillock under down-hanging elms, close shut in between a bend in the lane on our own side, and an amphitheatre of oak and ash and beach trees opposite; where we have partly found and partly scooped out for ourselves a turf seat and turf table redolent of wild thyme and a thousand fairy flowers, delicious in its coolness, its fragrance, and its repose.

Behind the thick hedge on the one hand stretch fresh water meadows, where the clear brook wanders in strange meanders between clumps of alder-bushes and willow-pollards; fringed by the blue forget-me-not, the yellow loosestrife, the purple willow-herb, and the creamy tufts of the queen of the meadow; on the other hand we catch a glimpse over gates of large tracts of arable land, wheat, oat, clover and bean fields, sloping upward to the sun; and hear, not too closely, the creaking wagon and the sharpening scythe, the whistle, the halloo, and the

laugh, all that forms the pleasant sound of harvest labour. Just beyond the bend in the lane too, are two fires, belonging to two distinct encampments of gipsies ; and the children, dogs, and donkeys of these wandering tribes are nearly the only living things that come into sight, exciting Fanchon now to pretty defiance, now to prettier fear.

This is my constant resort on summer afternoons ; and there I have the habit of remaining engaged either with my book or with my pen until the decline of the sun gives token that we may gather up our several properties, and that, aided by my staff, I may take a turn or two in the smoothest part of the lane, and proceed to meet the pony-chaise at a gate leading to the old Manor House which forms the usual termination of my walk.

Now this staff, one of the oldest friends I have in the world, is pretty nearly as well known as myself in our Berkshire village.

Sixty years ago, it was a stick of quality and belonged to a certain Duchess Dowager of Atholl, that Duchess of Atholl who was in her own right Baroness Strange and Lady of Mann, with whom we had some acquaintance because her youngest son married a first cousin of my father's, and took the name of Aynsley, as his wife had done before him, as a condition of inheriting an estate in Northumberland. I have a dim recollection of the Duchess, much such an one as Dr. Johnson had of Queen Anne, as "a stately lady in black silk." Well ! in her time the stick was a stick of distinction, but on her leaving her Berkshire house it was left behind and huddled by an auctioneer into a lot of old umbrellas, watering-pots, and flower-stands, which my father bought for a song. I believe that he made the purchase chiefly for the sake of this stick, which he presented to my mother's faithful and favourite old housekeeper, Mrs. Mosse, who lived in our family sixty years, and was sufficiently lame to find such a support of great use and comfort in her short and unfrequent walks. During her time, and for her sake, I first contracted a familiar and friendly acquaintanceship with this ancient piece of garniture. It was indeed a stick of some pretension, of the order commonly called a crook, such as may be seen upon a chimney-piece figuring in the hand of some trim shepherdess of Dresden china. What the wood might have been I cannot tell : light,

straight, slender, strong it certainly was, polished and veined, and as I first remember it, yellowish in colour, although it became darker as it advanced in age. It was amongst the tallest of its order ; nearly five feet high, and headed with a crook of ivory, bound to the wood by a broad silver rim—as ladylike a stick as could be seen on a summer's day. The only one of the sort I ever met with had belonged to the great-grandmother of a friend of mine, and was handed down as a family relique ; that crook, probably of the same age as ours, was more ornate and elaborate, it had a curious carved handle, not unlike the hilt of a sword, decorated with a leather tassel, so to say a stick-knot.

Well, poor Mossy died ; and the stick, precious upon her account, became doubly so when my own dear mother took to using it during her latter days, and when she also followed her old servant to a happier world. And then everybody knows how the merest trifles which have formed part of the daily life of the loved and lost, especially those things which they have touched, are cherished and cared for and put aside ; how we dare not look upon them for very love ; and how by some accident that nobody can explain they come to light in the course of time, and after a momentary increase of sadness help to familiarise and render pleasant the memory by which they are endeared. It is a natural and right process, like the springing of a flower upon a grave. So the stick reappeared in the hall, and from some whim which I have never rightly understood myself, I—who had no more need of such a supporter than the youngest woman in the parish, who was indeed the best walker of my years for a dozen miles round, and piqued myself not a little upon so being—took a fancy to use this stick in my own proper person, and most pertinaciously carried this fancy into execution. Much was I laughed at for this crotchet, and I laughed too. Friends questioned, strangers stared ; but impassive to stare or to question, I remained constant to my supporter. Except when I went to London (for I paid so much homage to public opinion as to avoid such a display *there*), I should as soon have thought of walking out without my bonnet as without my stick. That stick was my inseparable companion.

To be sure we met with a few misadventures in our companionship. Once I left my prop behind me in a marquee

at a cricket-match, and it had well-nigh been tossed away amongst the tent-poles ; once it was stuck against a bush in a copse where I happened to be nutting, and got well thrashed (according to the notable example of Sancho with the galley-slaves), in company with its brethren the hazel-rods ; once it was lost in a fair (I am not sure that it was not cried upon that occasion) ; often forgotten in halls and vestibules ; and once fairly stolen by a mischievous schoolboy from a friend's portico.

This last calamity cost me a ten-mile walk, undertaken with an alacrity which proved how little I really needed my trusty supporter. Before I had discovered my loss—for that same prop of mine had passed many a summer night, leaning against the pillars of that portico—before I had even dreamt of the mishap, the papa and mamma of the delinquent chancing to have old-fashioned notions of good breeding, sent a servant with a magnificent note in the third person, setting forth in the choicest terms their regret and displeasure, deprecating my anger, and entreating me to fix the day and the hour on which they and the culprit might be permitted to wait upon me to renew their excuses in person. Such a note ! In diction, in caligraphy, in folding, it would have done honour to “The Polite Letter-writer :” the paper stamped with an oak-wreath, and breathing of attar of roses, and the seal as big as that bearing her Majesty’s arms from a public office, were real works of art. I could as soon have answered such a letter, or have sat in state to receive the threatened apology, as I could have taken a journey in the air upon a broomstick. Greatly preferring the offence to the reparation, I had nothing for it but to forestall the visit, shake hands with the poor boy, who turned out a fine spirited lad, and try, by laughing over the matter with his parents, to bring about a general pacification, in which attempt, they being less formidable in person than on paper, I happily succeeded.

Manifold have been our escapes. One was from an adventure natural to the stick-genus—a battle.

Walking past a farmhouse by the side of a fair neighbour, with no other companions than our dogs ;—hers a beautiful King Charles, mine a no less beautiful and far rarer spaniel of the old brown cocking breed, Flush, the father of Fanchon ;—our poor pets were set upon by a furious yard-dog un-

luckily let loose, a tremendous mastiff, dangerous to man and beast. The King Charles fled to his mistress, who instantly caught him up. Flush stood his ground, and would, I verily believe, have been killed but for me and my weapon. We did battle valiantly, and contrived to keep the foe at bay until, in a space of time which seemed very long, and was, I suppose, very short, the din brought forth the farmer, who, in the midst of a storm of screaming, scolding, growling, and barking, choked off his brute, and left my friend and me, the danger being over, so frightened that we could hardly get home. Although she had naturally consulted the safety of her own pet first, she had done her duty womanfully, so far as screaming went. That was the first fight I ever was in in my life, and I hope it will be the last.

Another misfortune, so to say personal, which befel my staff, was the loss of its own head, the ivory crook, which came off in the act of pulling down a rich branch of woodbine from the top of a hedge. A deep muddy ditch received the poor crook, which sank instantly, and, in spite of efforts many and various, could never be recovered. The worst part of this mutilation was, as often happens to living patients, the cure. Being sent to a parasol-shop to have a new crook put on, the stupid people first docked many inches of its height, and then stuck on so clumsily a heavy bone umbrella-top, that it fell off in a few days of its own accord without any accident at all. And the poor stick might have remained for ever headless and "curtailed of his fair proportion," but that a friend of mine (one of those persons who know how to do kind things in little as well as in great) happened to remember that she had an ebony top that would just fit it; and her husband, with equal kindness, completed the good action by fastening on the shining black knob so adroitly, that, although it has been now four or five years in wear, it remains as firm as the first day, looking only a little graver, and more fit for the poor old mistress, who, having at first taken to a staff in sport, is now so lame as to be unable to walk without one.

And since the black head has supplanted the white one, another association has come to endear this friend of sixty years. A little boy, called Henry, the child of the house (son, by the way, to the hemmer of flounces), has, ever since he has been four years old, watched my ways, and ministered

unbidden to my wants and fancies. Long before he could open the outer door, before indeed he was half the height of the wand in question, there he would stand, the stick in one hand, and if it were summer time, a flower in the other, waiting for my going out, the pretty Saxon boy, with his upright figure, his golden hair, his eyes like two stars, and his bright intelligent smile ! We were so used to see him there, silent and graceful as a Queen's page, that when he returned to school after the holidays, and somebody else presented the stick and the rose, I hardly cared to take them. It seemed as if something was wrong, I missed him so. Most punctual of petted children ! What would Henry have said to-day ?

I might have observed, if I had only seen what passed before my eyes, that something was amiss in our small household ; that Sarah answered the bell, and that the hemmer of flounces, when she did appear, seemed flurried and fatigued. But I was thinking of Sir Philip Sydney, of the "Defence of Poetry," of the "Arcadia," and of my own resolution to proceed to the green lane, and to dissect that famous pastoral, and select from the mass, which even to myself I hardly confessed to be ponderous, such pages as might suit an age that by no means partakes of my taste for folios. So I said to her, "That the afternoon being cool, and I less lame than usual, I thought we should not need Sam and the pony-chaise, but that I could manage to walk by the help of my stick."

At that word out burst the terrible tidings. My stick, my poor old stick, my life-long friend, the faithful companion of so many walks, was missing, was gone, was lost ! Last night, on our return from the lane, the place in the pony-chaise where Sam and I had carefully deposited it was found vacant. Sam himself, that model of careful drivers and faithful servants, had run back the moment he had unharnessed the pony, had retraced every step of the road, beating the ground like a pointer, questioning everybody, offering rewards, visiting ale-house and beer-house (places that, without special cause, Sam never does visit), to make proclamation of the loss, and finishing all by getting up at four o'clock in the morning, and beating the beaten ground over again. She herself, who so seldom stirs without me, and so seldom lets me stir without her, that she may pass for my shadow, or

(without offence be it spoken) for a sort of walking-stick herself, she had sallied forth, visiting lane and field, road and meadow, questioning reaper and gipsy, a sort of living hue and cry.

“And really, Ma’am,” quoth she, “there is some comfort in the interest the people take in the stick! If it were anything alive, the pony, or Fanchon, or little Henry, or we ourselves, they could not be more sorry. Master Brent, Ma’am, at the top of the street, he promises to speak to everybody; so does William Wheeler, who goes everywhere; and Mrs. Bromley, at the shop; and the carrier and the postman. I dare say the whole parish knows it by this time! I have not been outside the gate to-day, but a dozen people have asked me if we had heard of *our* stick! It must turn up soon. If one had but the slightest notion where it was lost! I do declare, Ma’am,” continued she, interrupting her lamentations, “that you don’t seem to be so much troubled about the poor stick as I am!” And with all her regard for me, I think she was a little scandalised at my philosophy.

“Why you and Sam seem to have done all that can be done,” replied I; “and perhaps if we go into the lane we may hear some tidings of my poor staff, for I shall be sorry to lose such an old friend!”

“Ah!” said she, “if one did but know where it dropped out of the chaise!”

And so we set forth, I with a new stick of Sam’s purveying, a provisional stick, whose very roughness and imperfection proved that that faithful adherent by no means despaired of recovering my legitimate supporter.

My little damsel was not wrong in accusing me of being calmer than she thought quite becoming under so severe a calamity; but as her inquietude and nervousness proceeded mainly from the state of feverish and impatient expectation, the mixture of hope and fear, in which she had passed the last twenty hours, so the absence of suspense and expectation had much to do with my resignation. I had some suspicion as to the place in which the stick had dropt, and no great hope of finding it.

Day by day, as the sun went down, we had the habit of being taken up at the gate of the short avenue that leads to the old Manor House—an abrupt turn, where the soft turf of

the wide lane ends, and the gravel road begins. This road, not much frequented in general, is full of the harvest population during this harvest month—groups of reapers, men and women, full-grown girl and half-grown boy, and little child—the little child who watches by the baby in the cradle whilst the mother reaps. On that side, too, they had just begun to carry the yellow sheaves which studded so richly the great open corn-fields that bordered one edge of the winding road, as the grounds of the old mansion, with their tall elms and rustic paling, bordered the other. Just in front, crossing the road, and meandering after its own wilful fashion, came the brook, traversed, at the choice of the wayfarer, by a low two-arched bridge, or by a wide shallow ford, just below.

Now, this has been a summer of great drought hereabouts; and we suffer much from summer drought in the cottage which we are about to leave, as places that feel most the winter damp very frequently do—the mud of one season baking into a brick-like clay at another; the ponds becoming dry under the same sunny influence, and the wells (for we have two) failing altogether, just when they are most wanted. I think the thing of all others which has most reconciled me to quitting the poor old place—the old home, with all its faults—is the contrast which the new cottage offers as to water. There we shall have a pump, that is never dry; two springs, to which the whole parish resorts, the men with yokes and pails, the women with pitchers—almost classical. Two clear gushing springs, a pond and a river!

However, we have not yet moved, and this delicious wateriness to come has little profited us during this sultry August. The fourfooted part of our family has particularly felt, not the absolute want—for we fetch, and beg, and buy, and all but steal—but the limitation of that prime luxury of nature. So Sam always drives through the ford, to cool the pony's feet, and commonly stops long enough in the middle to allow of his enjoying a good drink of the clear glittering pool; whilst Fanchon, who during the rainy season is as tender of wetting her pretty paws as a cat, has latterly condescended to walk out of the little carriage, in which it is her delight to sit perched, to walk, trembling and gingerly—something as a fine lady steps out of a bathing-machine—but still to walk down the steps, and drop into the water—drinking in the same

slow, mincing, half-reluctant manner, but still drinking, and then pausing upon the brink, to be taken home. Yesterday evening, I remembered that instead of walking leisurely down the steps, stopping half a minute upon one, and a whole minute upon the other, according to her usual mode, poor Fanchon, doubtless in a paroxysm of thirst, had fairly jumped out of the phaeton, giving the whole vehicle such a jolt as her weight hardly seemed capable of producing. Then and there I suspected went the stick, carried off by the slow current, until it became entangled by the sedges on the banks, or sank in one of the deep pools not unfrequent in the stream. So I gave up my poor old friend as drowned beyond all hope of resuscitation, and tried to comfort my little damsel by setting her a very creditable example of resignation.

It was hardly possible to be quite unhappy in a scene of so much healthy stir and bustle as this usually quiet lane exhibited.

My friends, the gipsies, had no less than three camps, with fires glimmering under the hedge, looking beautiful in the dark shadow, as fire always does, or sending up wreaths of curling smoke among the trees, a thin blue vapour, more beautiful still. There they were, in every picturesque form of work or idleness, making saucepans, weaving baskets, lying on the grass,—three camps, at small but not unfriendly distance, with one movable house, a grey horse, and two donkeys.

Then the wheat-carrying, threatened yesterday, was in full activity to-day; and wagons, some loaded, some empty, passed up and down the lane, escorted by stalwart carters and shouting boys. Reapers, too, were there in abundance, passing to and fro, and troops of children leaping in the cleared fields, and following the wagons along the lane. Most of these good people had heard of our loss, and questioned my little damsel as to its recovery. Our friends, the gipsies, were particularly interested in the subject; and there was one black-haired urchin, the laziest of the tribe, a musical genius, whom I had never seen before without a fiddle in his hands, but whom we now found, by way of variety, twanging a jew's-harp, who intermitted his melody to affirm with so much assurance that he had passed his whole day in the search, that it was utterly impossible not to give him sixpence.

Well! we at last sat down on our old turf seats, not far

from the entrance of a field where an accident had evidently taken place ; a loaded waggon must have knocked against the gate, and spilt some of its topmost sheaves. The sheaves were taken away, but the place was strewed with relics of the upset, and a little harvest of the long yellow straw and the rich brown ears remained to tempt the gleaners ; and as we were talking over this mischance, and our own, and I was detailing my reasons for believing that my poor stick had found a watery grave, we became aware of two little girls, who stole timidly and quietly up to the place, and began gladly and thankfully to pick up the scattered corn.

Poor little things, we knew them well !—we had known their father, dead of consumption scarcely a month ago ; and affecting it was to see these poor children, delicate girls of seven and five years old, already at work to help their widowed mother, and rejoicing over the discovery of these few ears of fallen wheat, as if it were the gold mines of California. A drove of pigs was looming in the distance ; and my little damsel flung down her work, and sprang up at once to help the poor children. She has a taste for helping people, has my little maid, and puts her whole heart and soul into such kindnesses. It was worth something to see how she pounced upon every straggling straw, clearing away all round the outside, and leaving the space within for the little girls. She even hinted to me that my new stick would be an efficient weapon against the pigs ; and I might have found myself engaged in another combat, but that the ground was cleared before the drove came near.

Pleasant it was to see her zealous activity, and the joy and surprise of the little creatures, who, weak, timid, and lonely, had till then only collected about a dozen ears, when they found themselves loaded with more than they could carry. Their faded frocks—not mourning frocks ; to wear black every day for a father is too great a luxury for the poor—their frocks were, by her contrivance, pinned up about them, filled with the golden wheat-ears, and the children went home happy. That home had once been full of comfort and of plenty ; for John Kemp, a gentleman's servant, had married the daughter of a small farmer, and had set up a little trade as a baker and shopkeeper. Civil, honest, sober, and industrious, the world went well with them for a while, and the shop prospered. But

children came many and fast, their largest debtor died insolvent, a showy competitor set up next door, and long before John Kemp was attacked by the fatal malady of England, which finally carried him off, poverty had knocked hard at his door. The long illness, the death, the funeral, had still further exhausted their small means, and now little was left, except that which is best of all—strong family affection, an unstained name, an humble reliance upon Providence, and those habits of virtuous industry and courage to take the world as it is, which seldom fail to win an honest living. The mother and the elder brother undertook the baking and the shop, the eldest daughter carried round the bread, the two next brothers were working in the fields, and the youngest of all we have seen in their efforts to contribute to the general support. Well ! it is a hard trial, but it is a good education—an education that can hardly fail to come to good. Many a rich mother might be proud of the two gleaners that we have seen this afternoon. 'They were so pleased and so thankful to carry their poor store to that poor home—they carried thither better things than wheat.

In the meanwhile, where, amid all this harvest-work, is the "Arcadia ?" Between asking questions and answering them, listening to condolences and thanking the condolers, talking to leasers and leasing ourselves, the afternoon has slipt away with little thought of the good knight, Sir Philip Sydney. The sun, which hardly showed his bright face until we reached the lane, is now setting in his glory ; and we must wind our way to the avenue-gate, or we may chance to have a hue and cry sent forth about us, as lost ourselves. So home we came.

About ten o'clock, after some *jiffling* of the latch, a patterning of childish feet, and an eager consultation of childish voices, the front gate was trembly opened ; and, after a short pause, another little sound of unassured footsteps, and another brief dialogue, a low knock was heard at the hall-door ; then the little feet advanced into the house, and the little-tongues gained courage to tell their good news. Mary Kemp and her brother Tom had brought back the lost stick.

It appeared that the child had overheard my suspicion, that the missing wand had been dropt in the brook during Fanchon's immersion, and had confided the story to her brother Tom, as soon as he returned from his labours in the

harvest-field. Tom, a bold urchin of ten years old, happened to be one of those boys who may be properly called amphibious ; pools, puddles, ponds, seemed to be his natural element, and paddling in the brook his prime enjoyment. Before he left off his petticoats, he haunted the water-side, angling with a bit of string tied on a willow rod, and a crooked pin for a hook, and, what is more wonderful, contriving to catch with that inartificial contrivance such small fry, roach and dace and minnows, as the stream afforded. Tom knew every inch of the brook, and, charmed at the very sound, forgot his long day's work, and set forth on the search, without even stopping to eat his supper. His little sister followed him to the meadows ; and just where the winding rivulet takes a bold sweep round a woody cape of rich pasture, where the willows and the alders are mixed with tall bulrushes, thither the slow current had carried it ; and there it stuck, caught between two stalks of the seeded meadow-sweet, and still further entangled by the leaves of the water-lily, a part of whose long slimy stalk, glistening in the moonlight, remained twisted around the ebony knob, a token of its involuntary bath, its perils, and its escape. I do not know whether the poor children, my little damsel, or I, were most rejoiced at the conclusion of the adventure.

But what room has it left for Sir Philip ?

Alas ! that bravest and most chivalrous of poets, that younger, gentler, more lettered Bayard, *our* knight, without fear, and without reproach, is fated in the person of his famous pastoral, at least, to be "lightlied" (if I may borrow a word from a fine old ballad) by those most bound to do him honour. It cannot be much less than fifty years ago that I heard the following terrible anecdote told quite innocently, without any perception of the reproach that it involved.

A governess at Wilton House, happening to read the "Arcadia," had discovered between two of the leaves, folded in paper, as yellow from age as the printed pages between which it reposed, a lock of hair, and on the envelope, inclosing the lock, was written in Sir Philip Sydney's well-known autograph, an inscription purporting that the hair was that of her gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth. None of the family had ever heard of the treasure. So this identical volume, not

only dedicated to his beloved sister but entitled by himself "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia,"* had remained for two centuries in the library of her descendants, without any one of them ever taking the trouble to open the book! The governess only—no Sydney, no Herbert—had taste enough or curiosity enough to take down the prose poem. I have not the honour of knowing the present master of Wilton, but judging by reputation I do not think that such a neglect could happen now.

After all, the "Arcadia" is one of those books which may be best appreciated by specimens. This description of scenery for instance:—

"There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble valleys whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets which being lined with most pleasant shade were witnessed so to by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep, feeding with sober security; while the pretty lambs, with bleating oratory, craved the dam's comfort; here a shepherd's boy, piping as though he should never be old; there a young shepherdess, knitting and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice-music."

The account of a stag-hunt is even more characteristic. It abounds in the faults as well as the beauties of the author.

"Then went they together abroad, the good Kalander entertaining them with pleasant discoursing—how well he loved the sport of hunting when he was a young man, how much in the comparison thereof he disdained all chamber delights, that the sun (how great a journey soever he had to make) could never prevent him with earliness, nor the moon with her sober countenance dissuade him from watching till midnight for the deer's feeding. O, said he, you will never live to my age without you keep yourself in breath with exercise and in heart with joyfulness; too much thinking doth

* Others, too, have loved the "Arcadia," always the delight of poets. Happening to look into that neglected but interesting book, "The Life of Hayley," I see that, during a tedious recovery from a severe illness in his childhood, his chief amusement was derived from listening to his mother as she read to him this famous Pastoral.

consume the spirits ; and oft it falls out, that, while one thinks too much of his doing, he leaves to do the effect of his thinking. - Then, spared he not to remember how much Arcadia was changed since his youth ; activity and good-fellowship being nothing in the price it was then held in ; but, according to the nature of the old-growing world, still worse and worse. Then would he tell them stories of such gallantry as he had known ; and so with pleasant company beguiled the time's haste, and shortened the way's length, till they came to the side of the wood, where the hounds were in couples staying their coming, but with a whining accent craving liberty ; many of them in colour and marks so resembling that it showed they were of one kind. The huntsmen handsomely attired in their green liveries, as though they were children of summer, with staves in their hands, to beat the guiltless earth when the hounds were at a fault ; and with horns about their necks to sound an alarm upon a silly fugitive ; the hounds were straight uncoupled, and ere long the stag thought it better to trust to the nimbleness of his feet than to the slender fortification of his lodging ; but even his feet betrayed him, for howsoever they went, they themselves uttered themselves to the scent of their enemies, who, one taking it of another, and sometimes believing the wind's advertisements, sometimes the view of their faithful counsellors, the huntsmen, with open mouths then denounced war, when the war was already begun. Their cry being composed of so well-sorted mouths, that any man would perceive therein some kind of proportion, but the skilful woodmen did find a music. Then delight and variety of opinion drew the horsemen sundry ways, yet cheering their hounds with voice and horn, kept still as it were together. The wood seemed to conspire with them against its own citizens, dispersing their noise through all his quarters ; and even the nymph Echo left to bewail the loss of Narcissus, and became a hunter. But the stag was in the end so hotly pursued, that leaving his flight, he was driven to make courage of despair ; and so, turning his head, made the hounds with change of speech to testify that he was at a bay ; as if from hot pursuit of their enemy they were suddenly come to a parley."

So far, Sir Philip. Here is another bit of pastoral scenery from the hand of that gentle brother of the angle, Master

Izaak Walton, whose portrait of a country milkmaid may vie with "the shepherd's boy piping as though he should never grow old," of the "Arcadia." Piscator and his scholar, Venator, are returning to their inn, after a day's angling. Venator says:

"*Ven.*—A match, good master: let's go to that house, for the linen looks white, and smells of lavender. Let's be going, good master, for I am hungry again with fishing.

"*Pisc.*—Nay, stay a little, good scholar. I caught my last trout with a worm, now I will put on a minnow, and try a quarter of an hour about yonder trees for another, and so walk towards our lodging. Look you, scholar, thereabouts we shall have a bite presently or not at all. Have with you, Sir! O' my word I have hold of him. Oh it is a great lubber-headed chubb; come, hang him upon that willow twig, and let us be going. But turn out of the way a little, good scholar, towards yonder high honeysuckle hedge: there we'll sit and sing, whilst this shower falls so gently upon the teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn these verdant meadows.

"Look, under that broad beech-tree, I sate down when I was last here a fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill: there I sate viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea, yet sometimes opposed by ragged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves, and turned them into foam: and sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs, some leaping securely in the cool shade, whilst others sported themselves in the cheerful sun, and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content, that I thought, as the poet has happily expressed it,

"I was for that time lifted above earth,
And possessed joys not promised at my birth.

"As I left this place, and entered the next field, a second pleasure entertained me. It was a handsome milkmaid, that had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never be, as too many men often do; but she cast away all care, and sang like

a nightingale : her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it. It was that smooth song, which was made by Kit Marlowe, now at least fifty years ago ; and the milkmaid's mother sung an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in my younger days.

“They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good ; I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion at this critical age. Look yonder ! On my word, yonder they both be a milking again. I will give her the chubb, and persuade them to sing those two songs to us.

“God speed you, good woman ! I have been a fishing, and am going to Bleak Hall to my bed, and having caught more fish than will sup myself and my friend, I will bestow this upon you and your daughter, for I use to sell none.

“*Milk-woman.*—Marry, God requite you, Sir, and we'll eat it cheerfully ; and if you come this way a fishing two months hence, a grace of God I'll give you a syllabub of new verjuice in a new-made haycock for it ; and my Maudlin shall sing you one of her best ballads, for she and I both love all anglers, they be such honest, civil, quiet men ; in the meantime, will you drink a draught of red cow's milk ? You shall have it freely !

“*Pisc.*—No, I thank you ; but I pray you do us a courtesy that shall stand you and your daughter in nothing, and yet we will think ourselves still something in your debt. It is but to sing us a song that was sung by your daughter when I last passed over this meadow, eight or nine days since.

“*Milk-woman.*—What song was it, I pray ? Was it, ‘Come, shepherds, deck your herds ?’ or ‘As, at noon, Dulcina rested ?’ or ‘Phillida flouts me ?’ or ‘Chevy Chase ?’ or ‘Johnny Armstrong ?’ or ‘Troy Town ?’

“*Pisc.*—No, it is none of those. It is a song that your daughter sang the first part, and you sang the answer to it.

“*Milk-woman.*—O, I know it now. I learned the first part in my golden age, when I was about the age of my poor daughter ; and the latter part, which indeed fits me best now, but two or three years ago, when the cares of the world began to take hold of me. But you shall, God willing, hear them both, and sung as well as we can, for we both love anglers. Come, Maudlin, sing the first part to the gentlemen, with a merry heart, and I'll sing the second when you have done.

“THE MILKMAID’S SONG.

“Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, or hills, or field,
Or woods and steepy mountains yield.

“Where we will sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed our flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

“And I will make thee beds of roses,
And then a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered o’er with leaves of myrtle

“A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Slippers lined choicely for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

“A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs ;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

“Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

“The shepherd-swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning :
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

“*Ven.*—Trust me, master, it is a choice song, and sweetly sung by honest Maudlin. I now see it was not without cause that our good Queen Elizabeth did so often wish herself a milkmaid all the month of May, because they are not troubled with fears and cares, but sing sweetly all the day and sleep securely all the night, and without doubt honest, innocent, pretty Maudlin does so. I’ll bestow Sir Thomas Overbury’s milkmaid’s wish upon her, ‘That she may die in the spring, and, being dead, may have good store of flowers stuck round about her winding-sheet.’

“THE MILKMAID’S MOTHER’S ANSWER.

“If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd’s tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

“ But time drives flocks from field to fold,
 When rivers rage and rocks grow cold
 Then Philomel becometh dumb,
 And age complains of care to come.

“ The flowers do fade and wanton fields
 To wayward Winter reckoning yields ;
 A honey tongue, a heart of gall
 Is fancy’s Spring but sorrow’s fall.

“ Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
 Thy cap, thy kirtle and thy posies
 Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,
 In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

“ Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,
 Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
 All these in me no means can move
 To come to thee and be thy love.

“ What should we talk of dainties then,
 Of better meat than’s fit for men ?
 These are but vain ; that’s only good
 Which God hath blest and sent for food.

“ But could youth last and love still breed,
 Had joys no date, nor age no need,
 Then these delights my mind might move
 To live with thee and be thy love.

“ *Mother*.—Well, I have done my song.”

And a delicious song it is. Certainly it was not amongst the least of the many excellencies of Izaak Walton’s charming book, that he helped to render popular so many pure and beautiful lyrics. Marlowe’s poem, indeed, could never die, for it had been quoted by Shakespeare ; but Sir Walter Raleigh’s reply is still finer.

We wonder, in reading the milkwoman’s list of songs and ballads, which looks like a table of contents to one of the books into which Bishop Percy divided his volumes, whether the country lasses of those days—southern lasses, too, for the colloquy passes upon the banks of the Lea—did actually sing border war-songs, like “ Chevy Chase,” or classical legends, like “ Troy Town.” I fear me that their more lettered successors would select very inferior specimens of lyrical composition.

I must add one more extract, if only for the sake of “ holy Mr. Herbert’s” four stanzas :—

“ And now, scholar, my direction for fly-fishing is ended with this shower, for it has done raining : and now look about

you, and see how pleasantly that meadow looks ; nay, and the earth smells as sweetly too. Come, let me tell you what holy Mr. Herbert says of such days and flowers as these ; and then we will thank God that we enjoy them, and walk to the river, and sit down quietly and try to catch the other brace of trouts :—

“ Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky ;
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to-night—
For thou must die.

“ Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye !
Thy root is ever in the grave—
And thou must die.

“ Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie ;
My music shows you have your closes—
And all must die.

“ Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber never gives ;
But when the whole world turns to coal—
Then chiefly lives.”

Besides “The Complete Angler,” Izaak Walton has left us a volume, containing four or five lives of eminent men, quite as fine as that great Pastoral, although in a very different way. His life of Dr. Donne, the satirist and theologian, contains an account of a vision (the apparition of a beloved wife in England, passing before the waking eyes of her husband in Paris), which, both for the clearness of the narration and the undoubted authenticity of the event, is amongst the most interesting that is to be found in the long catalogue of supernatural visitations.

XVI.

SPANISH BALLADS.

EVERY one of any imagination—every one at all addicted to that grand art of dreaming with the eyes open, and building what are called castles in the air—has, I suppose, his own peculiar realm of dreamland, his own chosen country, his own favourite period ; and from my earliest hour of fanciful idle-

ness, down to this present moment, Spain, as it existed when the Moors ruled over the fairest part of that fair country, has been mine. It is probable that I am not singular in my choice. Our vivacious neighbours, the Gauls, when they call their air-castles *châteaux en Espagne*, give some token of their preference for that romantic locality; and the finest creations of Italian poetry, although tolerably anomalous as to place and time, may yet, as a whole, be referred to the same period and the same country.

My fancy for the Moors, however, long preceded my acquaintance with Ariosto. What gave rise to it, I cannot tell. Who can analyse or put a date to anything so impalpable!—as well try to grasp a rainbow. Perhaps it arose from the melodious stanzas of “Almanzor and Zayda,” the favourite of my childhood; perhaps from the ballads in “Don Quixote,” or from Don Quixote himself, the darling of my youth; perhaps from an old folio translation of Mariana’s history, a book which I devoured at fifteen as girls of fifteen read romances, finding the truth, if truth it were, fully as amusing as fiction; perhaps from the countless English comedies founded on Spanish subjects; perhaps from Corneille’s “Cid;” perhaps from Le Sage’s “Gil Blas;” perhaps from Mozart’s “Don Juan!” Who can tell from what plant came the seed, or what wind wafted it? Certain it is, that at eighteen the fancy was full blown, and that ever since it has been fed by countless hands and nurtured by innumerable streams. Lord Holland’s charming book on Lope de Vega, Murphy’s magnificent work on Granada, Mr. Prescott’s Spanish Histories, Washington Irving’s graphic Chronicles, a host of French and English travellers in Spain, a host of Spanish travellers in South America, the popular works of Ford and Borrow, of Dumas and Scribe, Southey’s poetry, Sir Walter’s prose—all conspired to keep alive the fancy.

But, beyond a doubt, the works that have most fed the flame have been Mr. Lockhart’s spirited volume of Spanish ballads, to which the art of the modern translator has given the charm of the vigorous old poets; and Mr. Ticknor’s “History of Spanish Literature”—that rarest of all works in these days, when literature, like everything else, goes at railway speed,—a conscientious book, which, being the labour of a lifetime, will remain a standard authority for many generations.

In one of his recently-published letters, Southey—himself a powerful though somewhat fantastic ballad-writer—denies all merit to the Spanish ballads, accusing them of sameness, of want of action, and of want of interest. To this there needs but Mr. Lockhart's book to reply, even if the transmittal of so long a series of poems floating upon the memories, and living in the hearts of a whole people, were not answer enough—even if the very materials and accessories of these ballads were not sufficient : the felicity of climate, the mixture of race ; of Moor and Christian ; of veiled beauty and armed knight ; of fountained garden and pillared court ; of gigantic cathedral and fantastic mosque ; of mountains crowned with chestnut and cork-tree, and clothed with cistus and lavender ; of streams winding through tufted oleanders, amid vineyards, orange-groves, and olive-grounds ; of the rich halls of the Alhambra ; of the lordly towers of Seville ; of shrine and abbey ; of pilgrim and procession ; of bull-fight and tournament ; of love and of battle ; of princely paladins and learned caliphs, and still more learned Jews ! Why, this is the very stuff of which poetry is made ; and strange indeed it would have been, if, born amongst such beauty, and happy in a language at once stately, flowing, and harmonious, the great old minstrels—who, like their compeers of the Middle Ages, the equally great old architects, have bequeathed to us their works and not their names—had failed to find it.

The first specimen that I shall select is the ballad which Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, when at Toboso, overheard a peasant singing, as he was going to his work at day-break.

THE ADMIRAL GUARINOS.

The day of Roncesvalles was a dismal day for you, [two.
Ye men of France, for there the lance of King Charles was broke in
Ye well may curse that rueful field, for many a noble peer
In fray or fight the dust did bite beneath Bernardo's spear.

Then captured was Guarinos, King Charles's Admiral,
Seven Moorish kings surrounded him, and seized him for their thrall ;
Seven times when all their chase was o'er, for Guarinos lots they cast ;
Seven time Marlotes won the throw, and the knight was his at last.

Much joy had then Marlotes, and his captive much did prize,
Above all the wealth of Araby, he was precious in his eyes.
Within his tent at evening he made the best of cheer,
And thus, the banquet done, he spake unto his prisoner.

“Now, for the sake of Allah, Lord Admiral Guarinos,
Be thou a Moslem, and much love shall ever rest between us.
Two daughters have I!—all the day shall one thy handmaid be—
The other (and the fairest far) by night shall cherish thee.

“The one shall be thy waiting-maid, thy weary feet to lave,
To scatter perfumes on thy head, and fetch thee garments brave :
The other—she the pretty one—shall deck her bridal bower,
And my field and my city they both shall be her dower.

“If more thou wishest, more I'll give. Speak boldly what thy
thought is.”

Thus earnestly and kindly to Guarinos said Marlotes :
But not a minute did he take to ponder or to pause,
Thus clear and quick the answer of the Christian Captain was.

“Now, God forbid ! Marlotes, and Mary his dear mother,
That I should leave the faith of Christ and bind me to another.
For women—I've one wife in France, and I'll wed no more in Spain,
I change not faith, I break not vow, for courtesy or gain.”

Wroth waxed King Marlotes, when thus he heard him say,
And all for ire commanded, he should be led away ;
Away unto the dungeon-keep, beneath his vaults to lie,
With fetters bound in darkness deep, far off from sun and sky.

With iron bands they bound his hands ; that sore unworthy plight
Might well express his helplessness, doomed never more to fight.
Again, from cincture down to knee, long bolts of iron he bore,
Which signified the knight should ride on charger never more.

Three times alone in all the year it is the captive's doom
To see God's daylight bright and clear, instead of dungeon-gloom ;
Three times alone they bring him out, like Samson long ago,
Before the Moorish rabble-rout to be a sport and show.

On these high feasts they bring him forth, a spectacle to be—
The Feast of Pasque and the great day of the Nativity ;
And on that morn, more solemn yet, when maidens strip the bowers,
And gladden mosque and minaret with the first fruits of the flowers.

Days come and go of gloom and show. Seven years are past and
gone,
And now doth fall the festival of the Holy Baptist John ;
Christian and Moslem tilts and jousts, to give it honour due,
And rushes on the path to spread, they force the sulky Jew.

Marlotes in his joy and pride a target high doth rear,
Below the Moorish knights must ride and pierce it with the spear ;
But 'tis so high up in the sky, albeit much they strain.
No Moorish lance may fly so far, Marlotes' prize to gain.

Wroth waxed King Marlotes, when he beheld them fail,
The whisker trembled on his lip, and his cheek for ire was pale.
The herald's proclamation made, with trumpets, through the town,
“Nor child shall suck, nor man shall eat, till the mark be tumbled
down !”

The cry of proclamation and the trumpet's haughty sound
Did send an echo to the vault where the Admiral was bound. [loud ?
" Now help me, God !" the captive cries. " What means this cry so
O, Queen of Heaven ! be vengeance given on these thy haters proud !

" Oh ! is it that some Paynim gay doth Marlotes' daughter wed,
And that they bear my scorned fair in triumph to his bed ?
Or is it that the day is come—one of the hateful three—
When they, with trumpet, fife, and drum, make heathen game of me ? "

These words the jailer chanced to hear, and thus to him he said :
" These tabours, lord, and trumpets clear conduct no bride to bed,
Nor hath the feast come round again, when he that hath the right
Commands thee forth, thou foe of Spain, to glad the people's sight.

" This is the joyful morning of John the Baptist's day,
When Moor and Christian feast at home, each in his nation's way ;
But now our king commands that none his banquet shall begin,
Until some knight, by strength or sleight, the spearman's prize do
win."

Then out and spoke Guarinos : " Oh ! soon each man should feed,
Were I but mounted once again on my own gallant steed.
Oh, were I mounted as of old, and harnessed cap-a-pie,
Full soon Marlotes' prize I'd hold, whate'er its price may be.

" Give me my horse, my old grey horse, so be he is not dead,
All gallantly caparisoned with plate on breast and head ;
And give me the lance I brought from France, and if I win it not,
My life shall be the forfeiture, I'll yield it on the spot."

The jailer wondered at his words. Thus to the knight said he :
" Seven weary years of chains and gloom have little humbled thee.
There's never a man in Spain I trow, the like so well might bear,
An' if thou wilt I with thy vow will to the King repair."

The jailer put his mantle on and came unto the King,
He found him sitting on the throne within his listed ring ;
Close to his ear he planted him, and the story did begin,
How bold Guarinos vaunted him the spearman's prize to win.

That were he mounted but once more on his own gallant grey,
And armed with the lance he bore on the Roncesvalles day,
What never Moorish knight could pierce, he would pierce it at a blow,
Or give with joy his life-blood fierce at Marlotes' feet to flow.

Much marvelling, then said the King : " Bring Sir Guarinos forth,
And in the grange go seek ye for his grey steed of worth :
His arms are rusty on the wall, seven years have gone, I judge,
Since that strong horse hath bent him to be a common drudge.

" Now this will be a sight indeed to see the enfeebled lord
Essay to mount that ragged steed, and draw that rusty sword ;
And for the vaunting of his praise he well deserves to die :
So, jailer, gird his harness on, and bring your champion nigh."

They have girded on his shirt of mail, his cuisses well they've clasped,
And they've barred the helm on his visage pale, and his hand the
lance hath grasped ;

And they have caught the old grey horse, the horse he loved of yore,
And he stands pawing at the gate caparisoned once more.

When the knight came out the Moors did shout, and loudly laughed
the King,

For the horse he pranced and capered and furiously did fling ;
But Guarinos whispered in his ear, and looked into his face,
Then stood the old charger, like a lamb, with calm and gentle grace.

Oh ! lightly did Guarinos vault into the saddle tree,
And slowly riding down made halt before Marlotes' knee ;
Again the heathen laughed aloud. "All hail, Sir Knight !" quoth he,
" Now do thy best, thou champion proud ; thy blood I look to see."

With that Guarinos, lance in rest, against the scoffer rode,
Pierced at one thrust his envious breast, and down his turban trode,
Now ride, now ride, Guarinos ! nor lance nor rowel spare,
Slay, slay, and gallop for thy life ! The land of France lies *there* !

The "old grey steed" plays no mean part in the foregoing story ; and of the many ballads that celebrate the glory of the Cid, I hardly know one more pleasing than that which describes the mingled spirit and gentleness of his favourite horse.

BAVIECA.

The King looked on him kindly, as on a vassal true ;
Then to the King Ruy Dias spake, after reverence due :
" O King, the thing is shameful, that any man beside
The liege lord of Castile himself should Bavieca ride ;

" For neither Spain nor Araby could another charger bring
So good as he, and certes the best befits my King.
But that you may behold him and know him to the core,
I'll make him go as he was wont, when his nostrils smelt the Moor.

With that the Cid, clad as he was in mantle furred and wide,
On Bavieca vaulting, put the rowel in his side :
And up and down, and round and round so fierce was his career
Streamed like a pennon on the wind, Ruy Dias' minivere.

And all that saw them praised them ; they lauded man and horse,
As matched well, and rivalless for gallantry and force ;
Ne'er had they looked on horseman might to this knight come near,
Nor on other charger worthy of such a cavalier.

Thus to and fro a-rushing, the fierce and furious steed
He snapt in twain his hither rein :— " God pity now the Cid !
God pity Dias !" said the lords ; but when they looked again
They saw Ruy Dias ruling him with the fragment of his rein ;
They saw him firmly ruling, with gesture firm and calm,
Like a true lord commanding—and obeyed as by a lamb.

And so he led him prancing and panting to the King ;
 But " No ! " said Don Alphonso, " it were a shameful thing
 That peerless Bavieca should ever be bestrid
 By any mortal but Bivar : Mount, mount again, my Cid ! "

In these two ballads there is little mention of the ladies. But two of the most charming of the Moorish series are devoted to them exclusively. " The following," says Mr. Lockhart, " has been often imitated in Spain and in Germany." Its elegance could scarcely be increased in any language :—

THE BRIDAL OF ANDALLA.

" Rise up, rise up, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;
 Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town.
 From gay guitar and violin the silver notes are flowing,
 And the lovely lute doth speak between the trumpets lordly blowing ;
 And banners bright from lattice light are waving everywhere,
 And the tall, tall plume of our cousin's bridegroom floats proudly
 Rise up, rise up, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ; [in the air.
 Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town.

Arise, arise, Xarifa ; I see Andalla's face ;
 He bends him to the people with a calm and princely grace ;
 Through all the land of Xeres, and banks of Guadalquivir,
 Rode forth bridegroom so brave as he, so brave and lovely never.
 Yon tall plume waving o'er his brow, of azure mixed with white,
 I guess 't was wreathed by Zara, whom he will wed to-night.
 Rise up, rise up, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;
 Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town.

" What aileth thee, Xarifa ? what makes thine eyes look down ?
 Why stay ye from the window far, nor gaze with all the town ?
 I've heard you say on many a day, and sure you said the truth,
 Andalla rides without a peer among all Granada's youth ;
 Without a peer he rideth, and yon milk-white horse doth go
 Beneath his stately master, with a stately step and slow.
 Then rise, oh rise, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;
 Unseen here, through the lattice, you may gaze with all the town."

The Zegri lady rose not, nor laid her cushion down ;
 Nor came she to the window, to gaze with all the town ;
 But though her eyes dwelt on her knee, in vain her fingers strove,
 And though her needle prest the silk, no flower Xarifa wove.
 One bonny rose-bud she had traced before the noise drew nigh ;
 That bonny bud a tear effaced, slow dropping from her eye.
 " No, no," she sighs, " bid me not rise, nor lay my cushion down,
 To gaze upon Andalla with all the gazing town."

" Why rise ye not, Xarifa, nor lay your cushion down ?
 Why gaze ye not, Xarifa, with all the gazing town ?
 Hear, hear the trumpet how it swells ! and how the people cry !
 He stops at Zara's palace-gate. Why sit ye still ? Oh, why ?"

—“At Zara’s gate stops Zara’s mate ; in him shall I discover
The dark-eyed youth pledged me his truth with tears, and was my
I will not rise with weary eyes, nor lay my cushion down, [lover ?
To gaze on false Andalla with all the gazing town.”

The next, still of a Moorish maiden, is even more charming :

ZARA’S EAR-RINGS.

“ My ear-rings ! my ear-rings ! ‘they’ve dropt into the well,
And what to say to Muça, I cannot, cannot tell.’

‘T was thus, Granada’s fountain by, spoke Albuharez’ daughter.

“ The well is deep ; far down they lie, beneath the cold blue water.
To me did Muça give them, when he spake his sad farewell ;
And what to say, when he comes back, alas ! I cannot tell.

“ My ear-rings ! my ear-rings ! they were pearls in silver set,
That when my Moor was far away, I ne’er should him forget ;
That I ne’er to other tongues should list, nor smile on other’s tale,
But remember he my lips had kissed, pure as those ear-rings pale,
When he comes back, and hears that I have dropped them in the well,
Oh ! what will Muça think of me, I cannot, cannot tell !

“ My ear-rings ! my ear-rings ! he’ll say they should have been
Not of pearl and of silver, but of gold and glittering sheen,
Of jasper and of onyx, and of diamond shining clear,
Changing to the changing light, with radiance insincere ;
That changeful mind unchangeful gems are not befitting well :
Thus will he think :—and what to say, alas ! I cannot tell !

“ He’ll think, when I to market went, I loitered by the way ;
He’ll think a willing ear I lent to all the lads might say ;
He’ll think some other lover’s hand, among my tresses noosed
From the ears where he had placed them my rings of pearl unloosed,
He’ll think, when I was sporting so beside this marble well,
My pearls fell in :—and what to say, alas ! I cannot tell !

“ He’ll say I am a woman, and we are all the same ;
He’ll say I loved, when he was here, to whisper of his flame ;
But when he went to Tunis, my virgin troth had broken,
And thought no more of Muça, and cared not for his token.
My ear-rings ! my ear-rings ! Oh ! luckless, luckless well !
For what to say to Muça, alas ! I cannot tell !

“ I’ll tell the truth to Muça, and I hope he will believe
That I thought of him at morning, and thought of him at eve ;
That musing on my lover, when down the sun was gone,
His ear-rings in my hand I held, by the fountain all alone ;
And that my mind was o’er the sea, when from my hand they fell,
And that deep his love lies in my heart, as they lie in the well !”

These ballads are all from Mr. Lockhart’s delightful book. I add one or two extracts from the probably more literal version of Mr. Ticknor ; the first is the “Lament of the Count de Saldaña,” who, in his solitary prison, complains of his son,

who he supposes must know his descent, and of his wife, the Infanta, whom he presumes to be in league with her royal brother. After a description of the castle in which he is confined, the Count says :—

The tale of my imprisoned life
 Within these loathsome walls,
 Each moment as it lingers by
 My hoary hair recalls ;
 For when this castle first I saw,
 My beard was scarcely grown,
 And now, to purge my youthful sins,
 Its folds hang whitening down.
 Then where art thou, my careless son ?
 And why so dull and cold ?
 Doth not my blood within thee run ?
 Speaks it not loud and bold ?
 Alas ! it may be so, but still
 Thy mother's blood is thine ;
 And what is kindred to the King
 Will plead no cause of mine :
 And thus all three against me stand ;—
 For, the whole men to quell,
 'Tis not enough to have our foes,
 Our heart's blood must rebel.
 Meanwhile, the guards that watch me here,
 Of thy proud conquests boast ;
 But if for me thou lead'st it not,
 For whom then fights thy host ?
 And since thou leav'st me prisoned here,
 In cruel chains to groan,
 Or I must be a guilty sire,
 Or thou a guilty son !
 Yet pardon me, if I offend
 By uttering words so free,
 For, while oppressed with age I moan,
 No words come back from thee.

Some of these old songs are sufficiently shrewd and humorous ; witness the following, “ in which an elder sister is represented lecturing a younger one on first noticing in her the symptoms of love : ”

Her sister Miguela
 Once chid little Jane,
 And the words that she spake
 Gave a great deal of pain.
 “ You went yesterday playing
 A child like the rest ;
 And now you come out,
 More than other girls drest.

- “ You take pleasure in sighs,
 In sad music delight ;
 With the dawning you rise,
 Yet sit up half the night.
- “ When you take up your work,
 You look vacant, and stare ;
 And gaze on your sampler,
 Yet miss the stitch there.
- “ You 're in love, people say,
 And your actions all show it ;
 New ways we shall have,
 When our mother shall know it.
- “ She 'll nail up the windows,
 And lock up the door ;
 Leave to frolic and dance
 She will give us no more.
- “ Our old aunt will be sent for,
 To take us to mass ;
 And to stop all our talk
 With the girls as we pass.
- “ And when we walk out,
 She will bid that old shrew
 Keep a faithful account
 Of whate'er our eyes do ;
- “ And mark who goes by,
 If I peep through the blind ;
 And be sure to detect us
 In looking behind.
- “ Thus for your idle follies,
 Must I suffer too ;
 And though nothing I 've done,
 Must be punished like you.”
- “ Oh ! sister Miguela,
 Your chiding pray spare .
 That I 've troubles you guess,
 But know not what they are.
- “ Young Pedro it is,
 Old Don Ivor's fair youth ;—
 But he's gone to the wars,
 And, oh ! where is his truth ?
- “ I loved him sincerely,
 Loved all that he said ;
 But I fear he is fickle,
 I fear he has fled.
- “ He is gone of free choice,
 Without summons or call ;
 And 't is foolish to love him,
 Or like him at all.”

“ Nay, pray morn and night
 To the Virgin above,
 Lest this Pedro return,
 And again you should love,”
 (Said Miguela in jest,
 As she answered poor Jane);
 “ For when love has been bought
 At the cost of such pain,
 “ What hope is there, sister,
 Unless the soul part,
 That the passion so cherished
 Should leave your fond heart ?
 “ As your years still increase,
 So increase will your pains;
 And this you may learn
 From the proverb’s old strains;
 “ That if, when but a child,
 Love’s dominion you own,
 None can tell what you’ll do,
 When you older are grown.”

This dialogue is three hundred years old at the very least. I do not think it would be quite impossible to match it now, with a little change of names and of costume. Perhaps I may have myself altered some of the lines, since I quote from memory, and have not the book to refer to.

It is not the least gratifying tribute to Mr. Ticknor’s valuable work that it was recommended for perusal by Mr. Macaulay to the Queen of England.

XVII.

FEMALE POETS.

A D V E N T U R E A T W I L L I A M C O B B E T T ’ S .

MISS BLAMIRE—MRS. JAMES GRAY.

THE name of Blamire has always a certain interest for me, in consequence of a circumstance, which, as it took place somewhere about five-and-forty years ago, and has reference to a flirtation of twenty years previous, there cannot now be much harm in relating.

Being with my father and mother on a visit about six miles from Southampton, we were invited by a gentleman of the

neighbourhood to meet the wife and daughters of a certain Dr. Blamire. "An old friend of yours and mine," quoth our inviter to my father. "Don't you remember how you used to flirt with the fair lady when you and Babington were at Haslar? Faith, if Blamire had not taken pity on her, it would have gone hard with the poor damsel! However, he made up to the disconsolate maiden, and she got over it. Nothing like a new love for chasing away an old one. You must dine with us to-morrow. I shall like to see the meeting."

My father did not attempt to deny the matter. Men never do. He laughed, as all that wicked sex do laugh at such sins twenty years after, and professed that he should be very glad to shake hands with his old acquaintance. So the next day we met.

I was a little curious to see how my own dear mother, my mamma that was, and the stranger lady, my mamma that might have been, would bear themselves on the occasion. At first, my dear mother, an exceedingly lady-like, quiet person, had considerably the advantage, being prepared for the *rencontre* and perfectly calm and composed ; whilst Mrs. Blamire, taken, I suspect, by surprise, was a good deal startled and flustered. This state of things, however, did not last. Mrs. Blamire having got over the first shock, comported herself like what she evidently was, a practised woman of the world—would talk to no one but ourselves—and seemed resolved not only to make friends with her successful rival, but to strike up an intimacy. This by no means entered into my mother's calculations. As the one advanced the other receded, and, keeping always within the limits of civility, I never heard so much easy chat put aside with so many cool and stately monosyllables in my life.

The most diverting part of this scene, very amusing to a stander-by, was, that my father, the only real culprit, was the only person who throughout maintained the appearance and demeanour of the most unconscious innocence. He complimented Mrs. Blamire on her daughters, (two very fine girls) —inquired after his old friend the Doctor, who was attending his patients in a distant town—and laughed and talked over bygone stories with the one lady, just as if he had not jilted her—and played the kind and attentive husband to the other,

just as if he had never in all his days made love to anybody except his own dear wife.

It was one of the strange domestic comedies which are happening around us every day, if we were but aware of them, and might probably have ended in a renewal of acquaintance between the two families, but for a dispute that occurred towards the end of the evening between Mrs. Blamire and the friend in whose house we were staying, which made the lady resolve against accepting his hospitable invitation, and I half suspect hurried her off a day or two before her time.

This host of ours was a very celebrated person,—no other than William Cobbett. Sporting, not politics, had brought about our present visit and subsequent intimacy. We had become acquainted with Mr. Cobbett two or three years before, at this very house, where we were now dining to meet Mrs. Blamire. Then my father, a great sportsman, had met him while on a coursing expedition near Alton—had given him a greyhound that he had fallen in love with—had invited him to attend another coursing meeting near our own house in Berkshire—and finally, we were now, in the early autumn, with all manner of pointers, and setters, and greyhounds, and spaniels, shooting ponies, and gun-cases, paying the return visit to him.

He had at that time a large house at Botley, with a lawn and gardens sweeping down to the Bursledon River, which divided his (Mr. Cobbett's) territories from the beautiful grounds of the old friend where we had been originally staying, the great squire of the place. His own house—large, high, massive, red, and square, and perched on a considerable eminence—always struck me as being not unlike its proprietor. It was filled at that time almost to overflowing. Lord Cochrane was there, then in the very height of his warlike fame, and as unlike the common notion of a warrior as could be. A gentle, quiet, mild young man, was this burner of French fleets and cutter-out of Spanish vessels, as one should see in a summer-day. He lay about under the trees reading Selden on the Dominion of the Seas, and letting the children (and children always know with whom they may take liberties) play all sorts of tricks with him at their pleasure. His ship's surgeon was also a visitor, and a young midshipman, and sometimes an

elderly lieutenant, and a Newfoundland dog ; fine sailor-like creatures all. Then there was a very learned clergyman, a great friend of Mr. Gifford, of the "Quarterly," with his wife and daughter—exceedingly clever persons. Two literary gentlemen from London and ourselves completed the actual party ; but there was a large fluctuating series of guests for the hour or guests for the day, of almost all ranks and descriptions, from the Earl and his Countess to the farmer and his dame. The house had room for all, and the hearts of the owners would have had room for three times the number.

I never saw hospitality more genuine, more simple, or more thoroughly successful in the great end of hospitality, the putting everybody completely at ease. There was not the slightest attempt at finery, or display, or gentility. They called it a farm-house, and everything was in accordance with the largest idea of a great English yeoman of the old time. Everything was excellent—everything abundant—all served with the greatest nicety by trim waiting-damsels : and everything went on with such quiet regularity, that of the large circle of guests not one could find himself in the way. I need not say a word more in praise of the good wife, very lately dead, to whom this admirable order was mainly due. She was a sweet motherly woman, realising our notion of one of Scott's most charming characters, *Ailie Dinmont*, in her simplicity, her kindness, and her devotion to her husband and her children.

At this time William Cobbett was at the height of his political reputation ; but of politics we heard little, and should, I think, have heard nothing, but for an occasional red-hot patriot, who would introduce the subject, which our host would fain put aside, and got rid of as speedily as possible. There was something of *Dandie Dinmont* about him, with his unfailing good humour and good spirits—his heartiness—his love of field sports—and his liking for a foray. He was a tall, stout man, fair, and sunburnt, with a bright smile, and an air compounded of the soldier and the farmer, to which his habit of wearing an eternal red waistcoat contributed not a little. He was, I think, the most athletic and vigorous person that I have ever known. Nothing could tire him. At home in the morning he would begin his active day by mowing his own lawn, beating his gardener Robinson, the

best mower, except himself, in the parish, at that fatiguing work.

For early rising, indeed, he had an absolute passion, and some of the poetry that we trace in his writings, whenever he speaks of scenery or of rural objects, broke out in his method of training his children into his own matutinal habits. The boy who was first down stairs was called the Lark for the day, and had, amongst other indulgences, the pretty privilege of making his mother's nosegay and that of any lady visitors. Nor was this the only trace of poetical feeling that he displayed. Whenever he described a place, were it only to say where such a covey lay, or such a hare was found sitting, you could see it, so graphic—so vivid—so true was the picture. He showed the same taste in the purchase of his beautiful farm at Botley, Fairthorn: even in the pretty name. To be sure, he did not give the name, but I always thought that it unconsciously influenced his choice in the purchase. The beauty of the situation certainly did. The fields lay along the Bursledon River, and might have been shown to a foreigner as a specimen of the richest and loveliest English scenery. In the cultivation of his garden, too, he displayed the same taste. Few persons excelled him in the management of vegetables, fruit, and flowers. His green Indian corn—his Carolina beans—his water-melons could hardly have been exceeded at New York. His wall-fruit was equally splendid, and, much as flowers have been studied since that day, I never saw a more glowing or a more fragrant autumn garden than that at Botley, with its pyramids of hollyhocks, and its masses of china-asters, of cloves, of mignonette, and of variegated geranium. The chances of life soon parted us, as, without grave faults on either side, people do lose sight of one another; but I shall always look back with pleasure and regret to that visit.

While we were there, a grand display of English games, especially of single-stick and wrestling, took place under Mr. Cobbett's auspices. Players came from all parts of the country—the south, the west, and the north—to contend for fame and glory, and also, I believe, for a well-filled purse; and this exhibition, which—quite forgetting the precedent set by a certain princess, *de jure*, called Rosalind, and another princess, *de facto*, called Celia—she termed barbarous, was the

cause of his quarrel with my mamma that might have been, Mrs. Blamire.

In my life I never saw two people in a greater passion. Each was thoroughly persuaded of being in the right, either would have gone to the stake upon it, and, of course, the longer they argued, the more determined became their conviction. They said all manner of uncivil things ; they called each other very unpretty names ; she got very near to saying, "Sir, you're a savage ;" he did say, "Ma'am, you're a fine lady ;" they talked, both at once, until they could talk no longer, and I have always considered it as one of the greatest pieces of Christian forgiveness that I ever met with when Mr. Cobbett, after they had both rather cooled down a little, invited Mrs. Blamire to dine at his house the next day. She, less charitable, declined the invitation, and we parted. As I have said, my father and he had too much of the hearty English character in common not to be great friends ; I myself was somewhat of a favourite (I think because of my love for poetry, though he always said not), and I shall never forget the earnestness with which he congratulated us both on our escape from such a wife and such a mother. "She'd have been the death of you !" quoth he, and he believed it. Doubtless, she, when we were gone, spoke quite as ill of him, and believed it also. Nevertheless, excellent persons were they both ; only they had quarrelled about the propriety or the impropriety of a bout at single-stick ! Such a thing is anger !

Upon comparing names, and dates, and places, it seems probable that the Miss Blamire, whose name figures at the head of this paper, was the aunt of the Dr. Blamire, of whom we have been speaking. She died unmarried at Carlisle, in the year 1794, being then forty-seven years of age, the daughter of a respectable Cumberland gentleman, and having accompanied a married sister into Scotland many years before —a happy circumstance to which she owes her command of the pretty Doric that so becomes small pieces of poetry. Her verses remained uncollected till 1842, when they were published by Mr. Maxwell. They are well worth preserving, especially the one entitled

THE RETURN.

When silent time wi' lightly foot
 Had trod on thirty years,
 I sought again my native land,
 Wi' mony hopes and fears.
 Wha kens gin the dear friends I left
 May still continue mine ?
 Or gin I e'er again shall taste
 The joys I left langsyne ?

As I drew near my ancient pile,
 My heart beat a' the way ;
 Ilk place I passed seemed yet to speak
 O' some dear former day.
 Those days that followed me afar,
 Those happy days o' mine,
 Whilk made me think the present joys
 A' naething to langsyne.

The ivied tower now met my eye,
 Where minstrels used to blaw ;
 Nae friend stepped forth wi' open hand,
 Nae weel-kenned face I saw ;
 Till Donald tottered to the door,
 Wham I left in his prime,
 And grat to see the lad return
 He bore about langsyne.

I ran to ilka dear friend's room,
 As if to see them there ;
 I knew where ilk aye used to sit,
 And hung o'er mony a chair ;
 Till soft remembrance flung a veil
 Across these een o' mine,
 I closed the door, and sobbed aloud,
 To think on auld langsyne.

Some pensy chieels, a new sprung race,
 Wad next their welcome pay,
 Wha shuddered at my Gothic wa's,
 And wished my groves awa'.
 "Cut, cut," they cried, "yon aged elms,
 Lay low yon mournfu' pine :"
 "Na ! na ! our fathers' names grow there,
 Memorials o' langsyne."

To wean me fra these mournfu' thoughts,
 They took me to the town :
 But sair on ilka weel-kenned face
 I missed the youthfu' bloom.
 At ba's they pointed to a nymph,
 Whom a' declared divine ;
 But sure her mother's blushing cheeks
 Were fairer far langsyne.

In vain I sought in music's sound
 To find that magic art,
 Which aft in Scotland's ancient lays
 Hae thrilled through a' my heart ;
 The sang had mony an artfu' turn,
 My ear confessed 't was fine,
 But I missed the simple melody
 I listened to langsyne.

Ye sons to comrades o' my youth,
 Forgie an auld man's spleen,
 Wha midst your gayest scenes still mourns
 The days he ance has seen.
 When time has passed, and seasons fled,
 Your hearts will feel like mine,
 And aye the song will maist delight
 That minds ye o' langsyne.

I add an example of a still bolder effort—an attempt to make tender sentiment be felt under the disguise of the rude dialect of Cumberland. Perhaps it may be the effect of Auld Lang Syne on myself, that makes me think it eminently successful :—

AULD ROBIN FORBES.

And auld Robin Forbes has gi'en tem a dance
 I pat on my speckets to see them aw prance ;
 I thought o' the days when I was but fifteen,
 And skepped wi' the best upon Forbes's green.
 Of aw things that is, I think thout is meast queer ;
 It brings that that's bypast, and sets it down here ;
 I see Willy as plain as I din his bit leace,
 When he tuik his cwoat lappet and deeghted his feace.

The lasses aw wondered what Willy cud see
 In yen that was dark and hard-featured leyke me ;
 And they wondered ay mair when they talked o' my wit,
 And slily telt Willy that cud'nt be it.
 But Willy he laughed, and he meade me his weyfe,
 And wha was mair happy through aw his lang leyfe ?
 It's e'en my great comfort now Willy is geane,
 That he often said nae place was leyke his own heame.

I mind when I carried my wark to yon steyle,
 Where Willy was deyken the time to beguile,
 He wad fling me a daisy to put in my breast,
 And I hammered my noddle to make out a jest ;
 But merry or grave, Willy often wad tell
 There was nane o' the leave that was like my ain sel' ;
 And he spak what he thout, for I'd hardly a plack
 When we married, and nobbet ae gown to my back.

When the clock had struck eight, I expected him heame,
 And whiles went to meet him as far as Dumleane ;
 Of aw hours it telt, eight was dearest to me,
 And now when it strikes, there's a tear i' my e'e.
 Oh, Willy ! dear Willy ! it never can be,
 That age, time, or death can divide thee and me
 For that spot on earth that's aye dearest to me,
 Is the turf that has covered my Willy frae me.*

Mrs. James Gray is better known in England as Mary Anne Browne, and, under that name, might have furnished the text to another melancholy chapter on Prodigies—a chapter on fine and promising girls, who have become martyrs to the fond mistakes of parents, and the careless flatteries of friends, and have lost the happy and healthful thoughtlessness of the child in the premature cares, the untimely aspirations, the fears, anxieties, and disappointments of the poetess. If, in my humble career, I can look back to any part of my own conduct with real satisfaction, it is that I have always, when a young lady has been brought to me in her character or prodigy, had the courage to give present pain, in order to avert a future evil. I have always said, “Wait ;” certain that the more real was the talent, the greater was the danger of over-exciting the youthful faculties, of over-stimulating the youthful sensibility. In Miss Mary Anne Browne’s case, no advice was asked. I saw her first, a fine tall girl of fourteen, already a full-fledged authoress, unmercifully lauded by some, as if verses, especially love verses, written at that age, could be anything better than clever imitations ; and still more cruelly depreciated by others, as if we had a right to expect all the results of long study, of skilful practice, of observation, and of experience, from one who was in everything but her quick ear, and her fertile fancy, still a child.

Thus brought forward, praised to the skies one day, utterly neglected the next,—taken, as if a woman, into London society, and then thrown back upon a family circle in a provincial town,—her health and spirits suffered ; and, if she had not been in heart and temper a girl of a thousand, she would have become soured and miserable for life. The real power was in

* Those who are fond of Scotch music may be glad to be reminded that the simply-pathetic song,

“What ails this heart of mine ?”

is also by Miss Susanna Blamire.

her, however, and the depression was temporary. When taken from the unhealthy atmosphere of the stove, the plant recovered its strength, and blossomed freely in the open air. When no longer stimulated by factitious applause, she wrote verses deserving of sincere admiration and enduring fame.

An accidental visit to Ireland introduced her poems to the Editor of the "Dublin University Magazine;" and under his judicious encouragement she poured forth her various and earnest lays with astonishing fertility and abundance. In Ireland, too, she met the Scottish gentleman, Mr. James Gray, the nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd, whom, after some delay and difficulty, she married.

Her wedded life appears to have been singularly happy—as happy as it was brief. After a short illness, she expired, while still in the bloom of womanhood (she had not yet completed her thirty-third year), and while rising daily in poetical power and poetical reputation.

Her highest literary merit was, however, not known until after her death. Of all poetesses, George Sand herself not excepted, she seems to me to touch with the sweetest, the firmest, the most delicate hand, the difficult chords of female passion. There is a reality in her love, and in the verse that tells it, which cannot be read without a deep and tender sympathy. Beautiful and statuesque as her sketches from the antique undoubtedly are, I prefer to quote from these posthumous poems, written from her very heart of hearts, in which passion seems to burst unconsciously into poetry.

LOVE'S MEMORY.

I wove a wreath, 't was fresh and fair,
Rich roses in their crimson pride,
And the blue harebell flowers were there;—
I wove and flung the wreath aside :
Too much did those bright blossoms speak
Of thy dear eyes and youthful cheek.
I took my lute; methought its strain
Might wile the heavy hours along;
I strove to fill my heart and brain
With the sweet breath of ancient song :
In vain; whate'er I made my choice
Was fraught with thy bewitching voice.
And down I laid the restless lute,
And turned me to the poet's page;
And vainly deemed that converse mute,
Unmingled might my heart engage :

But in the poet's work I find
The fellow essence of thy mind.

I wandered midst the silent wood,
And sought the greenest, coolest glade,
Where not a sun eam might intrude;
And in a chestnut's quiet shade
I sate, and in that leafy gloom,
Thought of th' darkness of the tomb

And strove to lead my heart to drink
At the deep founts of wandering thought,
To ponder on the viewless link
Between our souls and bodies wrought;
To quench my passionate dreams of thee
Awhile in that philosophy.

Yet, all the while, thine image bright,
Still flitted by my mind to win,
Casting through dreamy thoughts its light,
Like sunshine that *would* enter in;
And every leaf and every tree
Seemed quivering with beams of thee.

Beloved ! I will strive no more !
Thine image, in vice-regal power,
Shall ruling sit all memories o'er,
Throned in my heart, until the hour
When thou thyself shalt come again,
Restoring there thine olden reign.

The next poem is also written in a hopeful mood :—

Fear not, beloved, though clouds may lower,
Whilst rainbow visions melt away,
Faith's holy star hath still a power
That may the deepest midnight sway.
Fear not ! I take a prophet's tone,
Our love can neither wane nor set;
My heart grows strong in trust : mine own,
We shall be happy yet !

What though long anxious years have passed,
Since this true heart was vowed to thine,
There comes for us a light at last,
Whose beam upon our path shall shine.
We, who have loved 'mid doubts and fears,
Yet never with one hour's regret;
There comes a joy to gild our tears;
We shall be happy yet !

Ay, by the wandering birds, that find
A home beyond the mountain wave,
Through wind, and rain, and hail, combined
To bow them to an ocean grave ;

By summer suns that brightly rise,
 Though erst in mournful tears they set ;
 By all Love's hopeful prophesies,
 We shall be happy yet !

It is really pleasant to know that, although the bliss was short in duration, yet the vows of that faithful heart were heard. Here is one other love-note :—

Another year is dying fast,
 A chequered year of joy and woe,
 And dark and light alike are past,
 The rose and thorn at once laid low :
 All things are changed ;—and I am changed,
 Even in the love I knew before,
 Not that my heart can be estranged,
 But I have learnt to love thee more.

Yes, to mine ear thine accents all
 Have grown more welcome and more glad,
 Thy coming step more musical,
 And thy departing tread more sad.
 They say the first bright dawn of love
 Hath bliss no other time can show ;
 But I have lived and learned to prove
 How dearer far its future glow.

Their disappointments we have proved,
 Dark clouds across our path have been ;
 Yet better through them all we loved,
 As dark and drearier grew the scene.
 Oh ! would this truth could bring relief
 To thee, when earthly cares annoy,
 That I would rather share thy grief
 Than revel in another's joy.

A temperament so framed must, of necessity, take pleasure in the beauties of Nature. I must make room for a few stanzas of her

ANTICIPATIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

The summer sunshine falls
 O'er the hot vistas of the crowded towns,
 Startling the dusty walls
 With beauty and with glory not their own
 The summer skies are bright,
 A canopy of peace above the strife
 Of human hearts that fight
 And struggle on the battle-plain of life.

Summers have passed away
 Since I a dweller mid this scene became,
 And still their earliest ray
 Hath sent a thirsty longing through my frame ;

A longing to be far
 In the green woodlands, in the pastures fair,
 And not as travellers are ;
 My heart hath yearned to be a dweller there.

It comes, it comes at last :
 All I have panted for is near me now ;
 Ere many hours have past,
 A cool untroubled breeze shall fan my brow.

The faint continuous hum
 That hath been round me till 'twas scarcely heard,
 No more shall near me come
 To mar the melodies of bee or bird.

No more the sultry street
 Shall echo to my quick uneasy tread ;
 Gladly I turn my feet
 To where the turf in daisied pride is spread.

No more the whirling wheel,
 The tramping horses, and the people's shout ;—
 Oh ! how my heart will feel
 The pleasant quiet circling me about.

Blessed to go away
 To where the wild-flower blooms and wood-bird sings,
 And lightly o'er the spray
 The purple vetch its wreathing garland flings.

* * *

One more I must quote, of a still different strain. It was left without a title, a mere fragment amongst her papers ; but the Editor of the " Dublin University Magazine " has called it

THE GIFTED.

Oh, woe for those whose dearest themes
 Must rest within the bosom's fold !

Oh, woe for those who live on dreams,
 Unheeded by the coarse and cold.

They have a hidden life, akin
 To nothing in this earthly sphere ;

They have a glorious world within,
 Where nothing mortal may appear ;

A world of song, and flower, and gem,
 Yet woe for them ! Oh, woe for them !

Such his perplexing grief who seeks
 A refuge upon stranger shores ;

In vain to foreign ears he speaks,
 In vain their sympathy implores.

The same sad fate a bark might prove,
 Laden with gold or princely store,

Without a guiding star above,
 With an unmeasured deep before.

The world doth scorn them, gibe, condemn ;—

Woe for the gifted ! Woe for them !

Surely, this was a very remarkable woman ; and these poems (there are many more of nearly equal beauty) should not be left to the perishable record of a magazine. Her earliest publications were, as I have said, of little worth ; but enough of the highest merit might be collected to form an enduring memorial of her genius and her virtues.

XVIII.

AMERICAN ORATOPS.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

ONE of the greatest, if not the very greatest, of the living orators of America, is, beyond all manner of doubt, Daniel Webster. That he is also celebrated as a lawyer and a statesman is a matter of course in that practical country, where even so high a gift as that of eloquence is brought to bear on the fortunes of individuals and the prosperity of the commonwealth—no idle pilaster placed for ornament, but a solid column aiding to support the building. A column, indeed, stately and graceful, with its Corinthian capital, gives no bad idea of Mr. Webster ; of his tall and muscular person, his massive features, noble head, and the general expression of placid strength by which he is distinguished. This is a mere fanciful comparison ; but Sir Augustus Caldecott's fine figure of Columbus has been reckoned very like him—a resemblance that must have been fortuitous, since the picture was painted before the artist had ever seen the celebrated orator.

When in England, some ten or twelve years ago, Mr. Webster's calm manner of speaking excited much admiration, and perhaps a little surprise, as contrasted with the astounding and somewhat rough rapidity of progress which is the chief characteristic of his native land ; and yet that calmness of manner was just what might be expected from a countryman of Washington,—earnest, thoughtful, weighty, wise. No visitor to London ever left behind him pleasanter recollections, and I hope that the good impression was reciprocal. Everybody was delighted with his geniality and taste ; and he could hardly fail to like the people who so heartily liked him. Amongst our cities and our scenery, he admired that most

which was most worthy of admiration ; preferring, in common with many of the most gifted of his countrymen, our beautiful Oxford, whose winding street exhibits such a condensation of picturesque architecture, mixed with water, trees, and gardens, with ancient costume, with eager youth, with by-gone associations, and rising hopes, certainly to any of our new commercial towns, and perhaps, as mere picture, to London herself ; and carrying home with him, as one of the most precious and characteristic memorials of the land of his forefathers, a large collection of architectural engravings, representing our magnificent Gothic cathedrals, and such of our Norman castles and Tudor manor-houses as have escaped the barbarities of modern improvers. We are returning ourselves to that style now ; but, twelve years ago, it was his own good taste, and not the fashion of the day, that prompted the preference.

I owe to his kindness, and to that of my admirable friend, Mr. Kenyon, who accompanied him, the honour and pleasure of a visit from Mr. Webster and his amiable family, in their transit from Oxford to Windsor ;—my local position between these two points of attraction has often procured for me the gratification of seeing my American friends, when making that journey ;—but, during *this* visit, a little circumstance occurred, so characteristic, so graceful, and so gracious, that I cannot resist the temptation of relating it.

Walking in my cottage garden, we talked naturally of the roses and pinks that surrounded us, and of the different indigenous flowers of our island and of the United States. I had myself had the satisfaction of sending to my friend, Mr. Theodore Sedgwick, a hamper, containing roots of many English plants familiar to our poetry—the common ivy (how could they want ivy, who had no time for ruins ?) ; the primrose and the cowslip, immortalized by Shakespeare and by Milton ; and the sweet-scented violets, both white and purple, of our hedgerows and our lanes ; that known as the violet in America (Mr. Bryant somewhere speaks of it as “the yellow violet”) being, I suspect, the little wild pansy (*viola tricolor*) renowned as the love-in-idleness of Shakespeare’s famous compliment to Queen Elizabeth. Of these we spoke ; and I expressed an interest in two flowers, known to me only by the vivid description of Miss Martineau—the scarlet lily of New York and of the Canadian woods, and the fringed gentian of Niagara.

I observed that our illustrious guest made some remark to one of the ladies of his party ; but I little expected that, as soon after his return as seeds of those plants could be procured, I should receive a packet of each, signed and directed by his own hand. How much pleasure these little kindnesses give ! And how many such have come to me from over the same wide ocean !

I could tell another story also of a great American orator ; a story told to me two or three years before this occurrence by another distinguished American visitor. He told it to me with the low tone of a deep sympathy one summer evening in my old garden room, the moon rising red and full above the pyramid of geraniums, and the scent of a thousand flowers floating upon the air.

I do not know why I tell it here ; except that both stories belong in some sort to my garden, and that both relate to men eminent in America as lawyers and as statesmen ; although of my friend's hero, for obvious reasons, I do not venture to give the name. Many years have passed since I heard that interesting narrative, and in small circumstances of detail I may mistake ; but the one great fact, the admirable self-denial and self-sacrifice can never be forgotten. It strikes too deep a root in the heart.

The story was of a father,—one of those sturdy pioneers of American civilization, who hew their way through the Western Forest,—and of his two stalwart boys. They had built a homestead, and cleared many acres around them, when, during a pause in their labours, one of the sons (I think the younger) addressed his father to this effect : “ Father ! the house is raised ; the trees are down ; the fields are fenced. You have my brother to help you, and can do without me. Let me go to the town and study. I feel that I was born to fight my way amongst men, and not to wear out my days in the toils of a husbandman.”

The father must have been worthy of such a son, for he understood him, and felt the full force of the appeal. “ Well, my boy,” said he ; “ go where you will, and my blessing shall go with you. Take these dollars, and make them last as long as you can, for I have no more to give.”

So the bold adventurer sallied forth to the nearest town where education was to be won. The dollars were but few ;

and the young pupil, although a model of frugality and application, found himself penniless long before he had fought his way through the college course. His courage, however, never failed. By that time he had discovered his own strength. He engaged with a lawyer to write for him during the evenings and by night, whilst he pursued his regular studies by day; thus defraying his own expenses, whether for education or for living; and evincing in his legal avocations such extraordinary ability and aptness, that by the time he had arrived at the head of his class, his friend the lawyer furnished him with a letter to his own brother, then in high practice in the chief town of the State, assuring him "that the recommendation which that letter contained would secure to him immediate employment, and eventually, with his own powers and perseverance, all that he required for a high success in life."

Enchanted with his prospects, our adventurer set forth upon a visit to his forest home, to take leave of his parents before the long absence which he anticipated.

On his arrival at the farm, he found the delight and pride which such a career could hardly fail to claim; but he found also that which he had seen no cause to expect—the brother whom he had left behind content with healthful labour sicken ing and drooping under the same hunger and thirst for mental improvement that he himself had experienced some years before. What was the resolve of that noble heart? How did he act under such a trial? He laid his letter of introduction aside—that letter which was to command fortune! He took his brother with him to the town which he had quitted as he thought for ever; placed him in the college where he himself had studied; returned to his old friend the lawyer; resumed his labours in the office, and worked calmly on until the brother, whom he wholly supported, aided by his instructions, had overcome all his disadvantages and attained the high place in the classes that he himself had occupied.

This was my visitor's story. I only wish I could tell it to my readers as he told it to me. But even under all the imperfections of my poor narrative, and lacking the crowning name that gives to it such a power of contrast, it still seems to me almost unequalled in its simplicity and grandeur of self-sacrifice. When some powerful monarch, like Charles the Fifth, abdicates the thrones of Germany and Spain and

the Indies, it sounds much. But then it is a sickly, aged, disenchanted man, who knows full well the vanity and nothingness of what he resigns ; who has felt for many a year how weary a thing it is to be an Emperor. Besides, he is an Emperor still. The eyes of the world are upon him. He has only put on a new form of royalty. Now, here is a young, an ambitious, a self-reliant spirit, who puts aside, not by one grand and solemn abdication, but by the quiet, silent, painful effort of days and months and years, the most precious crown of all the world, the bright crown Hope.

After some natural exclamations of admiration, came the equally natural question, "Did that favoured brother prove himself worthy of such a sacrifice ?"

"Alas !" said my friend, "he lived only long enough to show how worthy he would have proved. He had already taken his place amongst the most eminent lawyers of Massachusetts when he was snatched away by death."

To return to Mr. Webster: I quote (from a fine American edition of his speeches, sent to me by a friend, who gave every promise of following in the same track) part of an "argument on the trial of John F. Knapp, for the murder of Joseph White, Esq., of Salem, in the county of Essex, Massachusetts, on the night of the 6th of April, 1830."

I choose this thrilling story of a great crime, not merely on account of the fine picture which it presents of an old man murdered in his sleep, and the state of mind of the murderer, but because, as a subject of universal interest, the eloquence bestowed on such a theme will be better appreciated in England than those speeches which, referring to national policy, demand of the reader a certain acquaintance not only with the internal government, but with the position of conflicting parties in the United States. I might also have another reason for my selection ; a desire to adduce the authority of so eminent a statesman trained under the freest of all institutions and the most sparing of capital punishment, and passing his life in the vindication of individual and national liberty, against the unhealthy and morbid sympathy with crime and criminals which is one of the crying evils of our day.

Short as my extracts from this magnificent speech must necessarily be, the introductory statement is essential to their comprehension.

“Mr. White, a highly respectable and wealthy citizen of Salem, about eighty years of age, was found on the morning of the 7th of April, 1830, in his bed murdered, under such circumstances as to create a strong sensation in that town and throughout the community.

“Richard Crowninshield, George Crowninshield, Joseph J. Knapp, and John F. Knapp were, a few weeks after, arrested on a charge of having perpetrated the murder, and committed for trial. Joseph J. Knapp, soon after, under the promise of favour from Government, made a full confession of the crime and the circumstances attending it. In a few days after this disclosure was made, Richard Crowninshield, who was supposed to have been the principal assassin, committed suicide.

“A Special Session of the Supreme Court was ordered by the Legislature for the trial of the prisoners at Salem, in July. At that time, John F. Knapp was indicted as principal in the murder, and George Crowninshield and Joseph J. Knapp as accessories.

“On account of the death of Chief Justice Parker, which occurred on the 26th of July, the court adjourned to Tuesday, the 3rd of August, when it proceeded in the trial of John F. Knapp. Joseph J. Knapp being called upon, refused to testify, and the pledge of the Government was withdrawn.

“At the request of the prosecuting officers of the Government, Mr. Webster appeared as counsel, and assisted at the trial.

“Mr. Dexter addressed the jury on behalf of the prisoner, and was succeeded by Mr. Webster in the following speech:—

“I am little accustomed, gentlemen, to the part which I am now attempting to perform. Hardly more than once or twice has it happened to me to be concerned, on the side of the Government, in any criminal prosecution whatever; and never, until the present occasion, in any case affecting life.

“But I very much regret that it should have been thought necessary to suggest to you that I am brought here to hurry you against the law and beyond the evidence. I hope I have too much regard for justice, and too much respect for my own character, to attempt either; and were I to make such attempt, I am certain that in this court nothing could be carried against the law, and that gentlemen intelligent and just as you are, are not by any power to be hurried beyond the evidence.

Though I could well have wished to shun this occasion, I have not felt at liberty to withhold my professional assistance, when it is supposed that I might be in some degree useful in investigating and discovering the truth, respecting this most extraordinary murder. It has seemed to be a duty incumbent on me, as on every other citizen, to do my best and my utmost to bring to light the perpetrators of this crime. Against the prisoner at the bar I cannot have the slightest prejudice. I would not do him the smallest injury or injustice. But I do not affect to be indifferent to the discovery and the punishment of this deep guilt. I cheerfully share in the opprobrium, how much soever it may be, which is cast on those who feel and manifest an anxious concern that all who had a part in planning, or a hand in executing this deed of midnight assassination may be brought to answer for their enormous guilt at the bar of public justice. Gentlemen, it is a most extraordinary case. In some respects it has hardly a precedent anywhere; certainly none in our New England history. This bloody drama exhibited no suddenly-excited ungovernable rage. The actors in it were not surprised by any lion-like temptation, springing upon their virtue and overcoming it, before resistance could begin. Nor did they do the deed to glut savage vengeance, or satiate long-settled and deadly hate. It was a cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was all 'hire and salary, not revenge.' It was the weighing of money against life; the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood.

"An aged man, without an enemy in the world, in his own house, and in his own bed, is made the victim of a butcherly murder for mere pay. Truly, here is a new lesson for painters and poets. Whoever shall hereafter draw the portrait of murder, if he will show it as it has been exhibited in an example where such example was last to have been looked for, in the very bosom of our New England society, let him not give it the grim visage of Moloch, the brow knitted by revenge, the face black with settled hate, and the blood-shot eye emitting livid fires of malice. Let him draw rather a decorous, smooth-faced, bloodless demon; a picture in repose rather than in action; not so much an example of human nature in its depravity and its paroxysms of crime as an infernal nature, a fiend, in the ordinary display and development of his character.

"The deed was executed with a degree of self-possession and steadiness equal to the wickedness with which it was planned. The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim and all beneath his roof. A healthful old man to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft though strong embrace. The assassin enters through the window already prepared into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he passes the lonely hall, half lighted by the moon ; he winds up the ascent of the stairs, and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this he moves the lock, by soft and continuous pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise, and he enters and beholds his victim before him. The room was uncommonly open to the admission of light. The face of the innocent sleeper was turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon, resting on the grey locks of the aged temple, showed him where to strike. The fatal blow is given ! and the victim passes without a struggle or a motion from the repose of sleep to the repose of death ! It is the assassin's purpose to make sure work ; and he yet plies the dagger, though it was obvious that life had been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He even raises the aged arm, that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wounds of the poniard. To finish the picture, he explores the wrist for the pulse. He feels for it, and ascertains that it beats no longer ! It is accomplished. The deed is done. He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes through it as he came in, and escapes. He has done the murder—no eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The *secret* is his own, and it is safe.

"Ah ! gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the guilty can bestow it and say that it is safe. Not to speak of that Eye which glances through all disguises and beholds everything as in the splendour of noon. Such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection, even by men. True it is, generally speaking, that 'murder will out.' True it is that Providence hath so ordained, and doth so govern things, that those who break the great law of heaven by shedding man's blood, seldom succeed in avoiding discovery. Especially in a case exciting

so much attention as this, discovery must come and will come sooner or later. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance connected with the time and place; a thousand ears catch every whisper; a thousand excited minds intensely dwell on the scene, shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery. Meantime the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret. It is false to itself; or rather it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself. It labours under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. It finds itself preyed on by a torment which it dares not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is devouring it, and it can ask no sympathy or assistance either from heaven or earth. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him, and, like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears it working in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstance to entangle him, the fatal *secret* struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed, it *will* be confessed; there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.

“Much has been said on this occasion of the excitement which has existed and still exists, and of the extraordinary measures taken to discover and punish the guilty. No doubt there has been, and is much excitement, and strange indeed were it had it been otherwise. Should not all the peaceable and well-disposed naturally feel concerned, and naturally exert themselves to bring to punishment the authors of this secret assassination? Did you, gentlemen, sleep quite as quietly in your beds after this murder as before? Was it not a case for rewards, for meetings, for committees, for the united efforts of all the good to find out a band of murderous conspiritors, of midnight ruffians, and to bring them to the bar of justice and law? If this be excitement, is it an unnatural or an improper excitement?

"It seems to me, gentlemen, that there are appearances of another feeling, of a very different nature and character, not very extensive I would hope, but still there is too much evidence of its existence. Such is human nature, that some persons lose their abhorrence of crime, in their admiration of its magnificent exhibitions. Ordinary vice is reprobated by them, but extraordinary guilt, exquisite wickedness, the high flights and poetry of crime, seize on the imagination, and lead them to forget the depth of the guilt in admiration of the excellence of the performance, or the unequalled atrocity of the purpose. There are those in our day who have made great use of this infirmity of our nature: and by means of it done infinite injury to the cause of good morals. They have affected not only the taste, but, I fear, also the principles of the young, the heedless, and the imaginative, by the exhibition of interesting and beautiful monsters. They render depravity attractive, sometimes by the polish of its manners, and sometimes by its very extravagance; and study to show off crime under all the advantages of cleverness and dexterity. Gentlemen, this is an extraordinary murder, but it is still a murder. We are not to lose ourselves in wonder at its origin, or in gazing on its cool and skilful execution. We are to detect and punish it; and, while we proceed with caution against the prisoner, and are to be sure that we do not visit on his head the offences of others, we are yet to consider that we are dealing with a case of most atrocious crime, which has not the slightest circumstance about it to soften its enormity. It is murder, deliberate, concerted, malicious murder.

* * * *

"It is said 'that laws are made, not for the punishment of the guilty, but for the protection of the innocent.' This is not quite accurate perhaps, but, if so, we hope they will be so administered as to give that protection. But who are the innocent whom the law would protect? Gentlemen, Joseph White was innocent. They are innocent who, having lived in the fear of God through the day, wish to sleep in peace through the night in their own beds. The law is established that those who live quietly may sleep quietly, that they who do no harm may feel none. The gentleman can think of none that are innocent except the prisoner at the bar—not yet convicted. Is a proved conspirator to murder innocent?

Are the Crowninshields and the Knapps innocent? What is innocence? How deep-stained with blood, how reckless in crime, how sunk in depravity may it be, and yet remain innocence? The law is made, if we would speak with entire accuracy, to protect the innocent by punishing the guilty. But there are those innocent out of court as well as in; innocent citizens never suspected of crime, as well as innocent prisoners at the bar.

"The criminal law is not founded on a principle of vengeance. It does not punish that it may inflict suffering. The humanity of the law feels and regrets every pain it causes, every hour of restraint it imposes, and more deeply still, every life it forfeits. But it uses evil as the means of preventing greater evil. It seeks to deter from crime by the example of punishment. This is its true, and only true main object. It restrains the liberty of the few offenders, that the many who do not offend may enjoy their own liberty. It forfeits the life of the offender that other murders may not be committed. The law might open the jails and at once set free all prisoners accused of offences; and it ought to do so if it could be made certain that no other offence would hereafter be committed. Because it punishes, not to satisfy any desire to inflict pain, but simply to prevent the repetition of crimes. When the guilty, therefore, are not punished, the law has so far failed of its purpose; the safety of the innocent is so far endangered. Every unpunished murder takes away something from the security of every man's life. And whenever a jury, through whimsical and ill-founded scruples, suffer the guilty to escape, they make themselves answerable for the augmented danger of the innocent."

[Then follow nearly forty closely-printed octavo pages of the most minute and ablest dissection of every part of the case, the most crushing answer to the opposite counsel, and the most searching and subtle analysis of the evidence. Every scene of the tragedy, from the first conception of the plot to the awful catastrophe, passes before us as if we had been present bodily. We are eye and ear-witnesses to every incident. Mr. Webster winds up his speech with the following impressive peroration.]

"Gentlemen, I have gone through with the evidence in this case, and have endeavoured to state it plainly and fairly before

you. I think there are conclusions to be drawn from it which you cannot doubt. I think you cannot doubt that there was a conspiracy formed for the purpose of committing this murder, and who the conspirators were.

“ That you cannot doubt that the Crowninshields and the Knapps were parties in this conspiracy.

“ That you cannot doubt that the prisoner at the bar knew that the murder was to be done on the 6th of April.

“ That you cannot doubt that the murderers of Captain White were the suspicious persons seen in and about Brown Street on that night.

“ That you cannot doubt that Richard Crowninshields was the perpetrator of that crime.

“ That you cannot doubt that the prisoner at the bar was in Brown Street on that night.

“ If there, then it must be by agreement, to countenance, to aid the perpetrator; and if so, then he is guilty as a principal.

“ Gentlemen, your whole concern should be to do your duty, and leave consequences to take care of themselves. You will receive the law from the court. Your verdict, it is true, may endanger the prisoner’s life; but then it is to save other lives. If the prisoner’s guilt has been shown and proved beyond all reasonable doubt, you will convict him. If such reasonable doubts of guilt still remain, you will acquit him. You are the judges of the whole case. You owe a duty to the public, as well as to the prisoner at the bar. You cannot pretend to be wiser than the law. Your duty is a plain, straightforward one. Doubtless, we would all judge him in mercy. Towards him, as an individual, the law inculcates no hostility; but towards him, if proved to be a murderer, the law, and the oaths you have taken, and public justice, demand that you do your duty.

“ With consciences satisfied with the discharge of duty, no consequences can harm you. There is no evil that we cannot either face or fly from, but the consciousness of duty disregarded.

“ A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent, like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the seas, duty performed, or duty violated, is still with us for our happiness or our misery.

If we say, 'The darkness shall cover us,' in the darkness as in the light our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power, nor fly from their presence. They are with us in this life, will be with us at its close ; and in that scene of inconceivable solemnity which lies yet further onward, we shall still find ourselves surrounded by the consciousness of duty, to pain us wherever it has been violated, and to console us so far as God may have given us grace to perform it."

There is no need to enhance the merit of eloquence like this ; but I recollect to have heard that this immense effort was made immediately after a journey of unparalleled rapidity and fatigue, which would have completely exhausted the energy of any man but Mr. Webster.

XIX.

OLD AUTHORS.

BEN JONSON.

"O RARE Ben Jonson!" so said his contemporaries, and those contemporaries the greatest dramatic poets, the greatest poets of any age or clime. "O rare Ben Jonson!" says his tomb in Westminster Abbey; "O rare Ben Jonson!" echo we. But I doubt much whether our praises be not founded on very different qualities from those which were hailed with such acclaim by the marvellous assembly of wits who congregated at the "Mermaid." Hear what Beaumont, in his celebrated epistle to Jonson, says of that fair company. He writes to him from the country :—

" Methinks the little wit I had is lost
 Since I saw you ; for wit is like a rest
 Held up at Tennis, which men do the best
 With the best gamesters. What things have we seen
 Done at the ' Mermaid !' heard words that have been
 So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
 As if that every one, from whom they came,
 Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
 And had resolved to live a fool the rest
 Of his dull life ; then, when there hath been shown
 Wit able enough to justify the town
 For three days past ; wit that might warrant be
 For the whole city to talk foolishly .

Till that were cancelled ; and when that was gone,
 We left an air behind us, which alone
 Was able to make the two next companies
 Right witty ; though but downright fools, mere wise."

These men, admirable judges although they were, seem to have regarded with what we cannot but think an over-admiration the art which wanted the crowning triumph of looking like nature, and the learning which, displayed rather than pervading, overlays and encumbers his finely-constructed but heavy and unwieldy plays. We of this age, a little too careless perhaps of learned labour, would give a whole wilderness of Catalines and Poetasters, and even of Alchemists and Volpones, for another score of the exquisite lyrics which are scattered carelessly through the plays and masques which—strange contrast with the rugged verse in which they are embedded—seem to have burst into being at a stroke, just as the evening primrose flings open her fair petals at the close of the day. Lovelier songs were never written than these wild and irregular ditties. Here are some of them :—

HYMN TO DIANA, IN "CYNTHIA'S REVELS."

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
 Now the sun is laid to sleep,
 Seated in thy silver car,
 State in wonted manners keep.
 Hesperus entreats thy light,
 Goddess excellently bright !

Earth, let not thy envious shade
 Dare itself to interpose ;
 Cynthia's shining orb was made
 Heaven to clear, when day did close.
 Bless us then with wished sight,
 Goddess excellently bright !

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
 And thy crystal shining quiver ;
 Give unto the flying hart
 Space to breathe, how short soever.
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright !

SONG, FROM THE SAME.

Slow, slow fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears,
 Yet slower, yet, O faintly, gentle springs !
 List to the heavy part the music bears,
 Woe weeps out her division when she sings.

Droop herbs and flowers,
 Fall grief in showers,
 Our beauties are not ours.
 O I could still
 (Like melting snow upon some craggy hill)
 Drop, drop, drop, drop,
 Since summer's pride is now a withered daffodil.

SONG OF NIGHT, IN THE MASQUE OF "THE VISION OF DELIGHT."

Break, Phantasia, from thy cave of cloud,
 And spread thy purple wings ;
 Now all thy figures are allowed,
 And various shapes of things.
 Create of airy forms a stream,
 It must have blood, and nought of phlegm ;
 And though it be a waking dream,
Chorus. Yet let it like an odour rise
 To all the senses here,
 And fall like sleep upon their eyes,
 Or music in their ear.

CHORUS, FROM THE SAME.

In curious knots and mazes so,
 The spring at first was taught to go ;
 And Zephyr, when he came to woo
 His Flora, had their motions too :
 And thus did Venus learn to lead
 The Idalian brawls, and so to tread
 As if the wind, not she, did walk,
 Nor prest a flower, nor bowed a stalk.

SONG, IN "THE MASQUE OF BEAUTY."

So Beauty on the waters stood
 When Love had severed Earth from Flood !
 So, when he parted Air from Fire,
 He did with concord all inspire !
 And then a motion he them taught
 That elder than himself was Thought ;
 Which Thought was yet the child of earth,
 For Love is elder than his birth.

SONG, FROM "THE SILENT WOMAN."

(A lesson, dear ladies.)

Still to be neat, still to be drest
 As you were going to a feast ;
 Still to be powdered, still perfumed :
 Lady, it is to be presumed,
 Though art's hid causes are not found,
 All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face
 That makes simplicity a grace;
 Robes loosely flowing, hair as free :
 Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
 Than all the adulteries of art :
 They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

FROM A CELEBRATION OF CHARIS.

See the chariot at hand here of Love,
 Wherein my lady rideth ;
 Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
 And well the car Love guideth.
 As she goes all hearts do duty
 Unto her beauty,
 And enamoured do wish that they might
 But enjoy such a sight,
 That they still were to run by her side
 Thorough swords, thorough seas wheresoever she would ride.

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
 All that love's world compriseth !
 Do but look on her hair, it is bright
 As love's star, when it riseth !
 Do but mark, her forehead's smoothen
 Than words that soothe her !
 And from her arched brows such a grace
 Sheds itself through the face,
 As alone there triumphs to the life
 All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife !

Have you seen but a bright lily grow
 Before rude hands have touched it ?
 Have you marked but the fall o' the snow
 Before the soil hath smutched it ?
 Ha' you felt the wool of the beaver,
 Or swan's down ever ?
 Or have smelt o' the bud o' the briar ?
 Or the nard in the fire ?
 Or have tasted the bag of the bee ?
 O so white ! O so soft ! O so sweet is she !

SONG.

Oh ! do not worship with those eyes,
 Lest I be sick with seeing !
 Nor cast them down, but let them rise,
 Lest shame destroy their being.
 Oh ! be not angry with those fires,
 For then their threats will kill me ;
 Nor look too kind on my desires,
 For then my hopes will spill me.

Oh ! do not steep them in thy tears,
 For so will sorrow slay me ;
 Nor spread them, as distract with fears,
 My own enough betray me.

SONG TO CELIA.

I should hardly, perhaps, have thought of inserting a song so familiar to every ear as the following, had I not, in turning over Jonson's huge volume, been reminded of a circumstance connected with it, which greatly startled me at the moment. Milton talks of airs "married to immortal verse;" but it should seem that there is no marriage without an occasional divorce ; for the last time I heard the well-known melody which belongs to this fine Anacreontic, as indissolubly as its own peculiar perfume to a flower, was in an Independent Chapel, where widely different words—the words of a hymn—were adapted to the air. It was John Wesley, I believe, who said that he saw no reason why Satan should have all the best tunes ; and I should not lightly impugn the wisdom of any axiom of John Wesley, who understood human nature as well as most men. But in this instance, such is the force of association, that I can scarcely say how strongly I felt the discrepancy—all the more for the impressive plainness and simplicity of the Presbyterian mode of worship, and the earnest eloquence of the white-haired preacher. The sermon was half over before I had recovered the tone of feeling proper to the place and the occasion.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
 And I will pledge with mine ;
 Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
 And I'll not look for wine.
 The thirst that from the soul doth rise
 Must surely be divine ;
 But might I of Love's nectar sup
 I would not change for wine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
 Not so much honouring thee,
 As giving it a hope, that there
 It could not withered be.
 But thou thereon didst only breathe
 And sent'st it back to me :
 Since when it grows and smells, I swear,
 Not of itself, but thee.

FIRST SPEECH IN "THE SAD SHEPHERD."

Enter OEGLAMONE.

Oegla. Here she was wont to go ! and here ! and here !
 Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow :
 The world may find the spring by following her,
 For other print her airy steps ne'er left.
 Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
 Or shake the downy blowball from his stalk !
 But like the soft west wind she shot along,
 And where she went the flowers took thickest root,
 As she had sowed them with her odorous foot.

This delightful pastoral on the story of Robin Hood and Maid Marian is unhappily unfinished. Scarcely half is written, and even that wants the author's last touches.

SPEECH OF MAIA, IN "THE PENATES."

If every pleasure were distilled
 Of every flower in every field,
 And all that Hybla's hives do yield,
 Were into one broad mazer filled ;
 If thereto added all the gums
 And spice that from Panchaia comes,
 The odour that Hydasper lends,
 Or Phœnix, proves before she ends ;
 If all the air my Flora drew,
 Or spirit that Zephyr ever blew,
 Were put therein ; and all the dew
 That every rosy morning knew ;
 Yet all diffused upon this bower,
 To make one sweet detaining hour,
 Were much too little for the grace
 And honour you vouchsafe the place.
 But if you please to come again,
 We vow we will not then with vain
 And empty pastimes entertain
 Your so desired, though grieved, pain.
 For we will have the wanton Fauns,
 That frisking skip about the lawns,
 The Panisks, and the Sylvans rude,
 Satyrs, and all that multitude,
 To dance their wilder rounds about,
 And cleave the air with many a shout,
 As they would hant poor Echo out
 Of yonder valley, who doth flout
 Their rustic noise. To visit whom
 You shall behold whole bevies come
 Of gaudy nymphs, whose tender calls
 Well tuned unto the many falls
 Of sweet and several sliding rills,
 That stream from tops of those less hills,

Sound like so many silver quills,
 When Zephyr them with music fills,
 For them Favorius here shall blow
 New flowers, that you shall see to grow,
 Of which each hand a part shall take,
 And, for your heads, fresh garlands make
 Wherewith, whilst they your temples round,
 An air of several birds shall sound
 An Io Pæan, that shall drown
 The acclamations at your crown.
 All this, and more than I have gift of saying,
 May vows, so you will oft come here a Maying.

EPITAPH ON THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

Underneath this sable hearse
 Lies the subject of all verse,
 Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother ;
 Death, ere thou hast slain another
 Learn'd and fair and good as she,
 Time shall throw a dart at thee.

After all, we take leave of him, transcribing yet another exquisite song, and echoing our first words, “O rare Ben Jonson !”

FROM THE MASQUE OF “THE GIPSIES METAMORPHOSED.”

To the old, long life and treasure ;
 To the young, all health and pleasure ;
 To the fair, their face
 With eternal grace,
 And the soul to be loved at leisure.
 To the witty, all clear mirrors ;
 To the foolish, their dark errors ;
 To the loving sprite
 A secure delight ;
 To the jealous his own false terrors.

XX.

FASHIONABLE POETS.

WILLIAM ROBERT SPENCER.

A SCHOOL-DAY ANECDOTE.

GRANDSON of two dukes, nursed in the very lap of fashion, and coming into life at the time of all others when wit and fancy, and the lighter graces of poetry, were most cordially welcomed by the higher circles,—at a time when the star of

Sheridan was still in the ascendant, and that of Moore just appearing on the horizon,—William Spencer may be regarded as much the representative of a class, as John Clare or Robert Burns. The style of his verse, eminently airy, polished, and graceful, as well as his personal qualities, combined to render him the idol of that society which, by common consent, we are content to call the best. His varied accomplishments enlivened a country-house ; his brilliant wit formed the delight of a dinner-table ; while his singular charm of manner, and perhaps of character, gave a permanency to his social success, by converting the admirers of an evening into friends for life. With all these genial triumphs, however, we cannot look over the little volume of graceful verse, which is all that now remains of so splendid a reputation, without feeling that the author was born for better, higher, more enduring purposes ; that the charming trifler, whose verses, forty years ago, every lady knew by heart, and which are now well-nigh forgotten, ought not to have wasted his high endowments in wreathing garlands for festivals—ought not, above all, to have gone on, from youth to age, leading the melancholy life which is all holiday.

Nevertheless, we must accept these verses for such as they are, just as we admire, unquestioning, the wing of a butterfly, or the petal of a flower ; and in their kind they are exquisite. Look at the fancy and finish of these stanzas !

TO THE LADY ANNE HAMILTON.*

Too late I staid, forgive the crime,
Unheeded flew the hours ;
How noiseless falls the foot of Time
That only treads on flowers !

What eye with clear account remarks
The ebbing of his glass,
When all its sands are diamond sparks
That dazzle as they pass ?

Ah ! who to sober measurement
Time's happy swiftness brings,
When birds of Paradise have lent
Their plumage for his wings ?

* Very sweetly mated with one of the sweetest old Irish airs.
"The Yellow Horse."

In the next extract there is an unexpected touch of sentiment mixed with its playfulness that is singularly captivating.

GOOD-BYE AND HOW-D'-YE-DO.

- One day Good-bye met How-d'-ye-do,
 Too close to shun saluting,
 But soon the rival sisters flew
 From kissing to disputing.
- “ Away,” says How-d'-ye-do; “ your mien
 Appals my cheerful nature,
 No name so sad as yours is seen
 In sorrow’s nomenclature.
- “ Where’er I give one sunshine hour,
 Your cloud comes o’er to shade it ;
 Where’er I plant one bosom flower,
 Your mildew drops to fade it.
- “ Ere How-d'-ye-do has tuned each tongue
 To Hope’s delightful measure,
 Good-bye in Friendship’s ear has rung
 The knell of parting pleasure !
- “ From sorrows past my chemic skill
 Draws smiles of consolation,
 Whilst you from present joys distil
 The tears of separation.”
- Good-bye replied, “ Your statement’s true,
 And well your cause you ’ve pleaded ;
 But pray who’d think of How-d'-ye-do,
 Unless Good-bye preceded ?
- “ Without my prior influence,
 Could yours have ever flourish’d ;
 And can your hand one flower dispense,
 But those my tears have nourish’d ?
- “ How oft, if at the court of Love
 Concealment be the fashion,
 When How-d'-ye-do has fail’d to move,
 Good-bye reveals the passion !
- “ How oft, when Cupid’s fires decline,
 As every heart remembers,
 One sigh of mine, and only mine,
 Revives the dying embers !
- “ Go, bid the timid lover choose,
 And I ’ll resign my charter,
 If he for ten kind How-d'-ye-does
 One kind Good-bye would barter !
- “ From love and friendship’s kindred source
 We both derive existence,
 And they would both lose half their force,
 Without our joint assistance.

“ ‘Tis well the world our merit knows,
 Since time, there’s no denying,
 One half in How-d’-ye-doing goes,
 And t’ other in Good-byeing !”

Nobody has told the tragedy of Beth-Gelert so well as Mr. Spencer, in his simple but elegant ballad. I do not know if many persons partake my feeling respecting those stories of which the animal world are the heroes ; but to me they seem more touching than grander histories of men and women. Dumb creatures—to use that phrase of the common people, which makes, in its two homely words, so true an appeal to our protection and our pity—dumb creatures are in their love so faithful, so patient in their sufferings, so submissive under wrong, so powerless for remonstrance or for redress, that we take their part against the human brutes, their oppressors, as naturally, and almost as vehemently, as we do that of Philoctetes against Ulysses, or of Lear against Goneril. I am not sure that I do not carry my sympathy still farther. In the famous story of the Falcon, for instance, in Boccaccio, where a lover, ruined by the charges to which he puts himself in courting an ungrateful mistress, and owing his very existence to the game struck down for him by a favourite hawk, kills the poor bird to furnish forth a dinner for the haughty beauty, when she at last comes to visit him, I never could help thinking that the enamoured cavalier made a very bad exchange, when he lost the falcon and won the lady. His conscience must have pricked him all his life. He had not even, so far as we hear, the consolation, such as it is, of erecting a monument to the memory of his murdered favourite, on which, like Llewelyn, to “ hang his horn and spear.”

BETH-GELERT ; OR, THE GRAVE OF THE GREYHOUND.

The spearmen heard the bugle sound,
 And cheerily smiled the morn ;
 And many a brach and many a hound
 Obeyed Llewelyn’s horn.

And still he blew a louder blast,
 And gave a lustier cheer :
 “ Come, Gelert, come, wer’t never last
 Llewelyn’s horn to hear !

“ Oh, where does faithful Gelert roam,
 The flower of all his race ;
 So true, so brave, a lamb at home,
 A lion in the chace ?”

'Twas only at Llewelyn's board
 The faithful Gelert fed ;
 He watched, he served, he cheered his lord,
 And sentinelled his bed.

In sooth he was a peerless hound,
 The gift of royal John ;
 But now no Gelert could be found,
 And all the chace rode on.

And now, as o'er the rocks and dells,
 The gallant chidings rise,
 All Snowden's craggy chaos yells
 The many-mingled cries.

That day Llewelyn little loved
 The chace of hart and hare ;
 And scant and small the booty proved,
 For Gelert was not there.

Unpleased Llewelyn homeward hied ;
 When near the portal seat,
 His truant Gelert he espied
 Bounding his lord to greet.

But when he gained the castle door,
 Aghast the chieftain stood ;
 The hound all o'er was smeared with gore,
 His lips, his fangs, ran blood.

Llewelyn gazed with fierce surprise ;
 Unused such looks to meet,
 His favourite checked his joyful guise,
 And crouched and licked his feet.

Onward in haste Llewelyn passed,
 And on went Gelert too ;
 And still where'er his eyes he cast,
 Fresh blood-gouts shocked his view.

O'erturned his infant's bed he found,
 With blood-stained covert rent ;
 And all around the walls and ground
 With recent blood besprent.

He called his child—no voice replied—
 He searched with terror wild ;
 Blood, blood he found on every side,
 But nowhere found his child.

"Hell-hound ! my boy's by thee devoured !"
 The frantic father cried ;
 And to the hilt his vengeful sword
 He plunged in Gelert's side.

His suppliant looks as prone he fell
 No pity could impart ;
 But still his Gelert's dying yell
 Passed heavy o'er his heart.

Aroused by Gelert's dying yell
 Some slumberer wakened nigh :
 What words the parent's joy could tell
 To hear his infant's cry

Concealed beneath a tumbled heap
 His hurried search had missed :
 All glowing from his rosy sleep
 The cherub boy he kissed.

Nor scathe had he, nor harm, nor dread :
 But the same couch beneath
 Lay a gaunt wolf, all torn and dead,
 Tremendous still in death.

Ah, what was then Llewelyn's pain !
 For now the truth was clear,
 His gallant hound the wolf had slain
 To save Llewelyn's heir.

Vain, vain was all Llewelyn's woe :
 " Best of thy kind, Adieu !
 The frantic blow that laid thee low
 This heart shall ever rue ! "

And now a gallant tomb they raise,
 With costly sculptures decked,
 And marbles storied with his praise
 Poor Gelert's bones protect.

There never could the spearman pass,
 Or forester, unmoved ;
 There oft the tear-besprinkled grass,
 Llewelyn's sorrow proved.

And there he hung his horn and spear,
 And there, as evening fell,
 In fancy's ear he oft would hear
 Poor Gelert's dying yell.

And till great Snowden's rocks grow old,
 And cease the storm to brave,
 The consecrated spot shall hold
 The name of " Gelert's grave ! "

" The Emigrant's Grave " always seemed to me eminently pathetic, and, above all, eminently true. There can hardly be a country neighbourhood in England in which the recollection of some " poor exile of France," equally patient, equally cheerful, equally kind, may not still be found, softening national animosity, and, if he were (as often chanced) of the priesthood, effacing the still deeper prejudice that teaches the followers of Luther to dread the members of the Church of Rome.

THE EMIGRANT'S GRAVE.

Why mourn ye ? Why strew ye those flowerets around
 On yon new-sodded grave, as ye slowly advance ?
 In yon new-sodded grave (ever dear be the ground !)
 Lies the stranger we loved, the poor exile of France !

And is the poor exile at rest from his woe;
 No longer the sport of misfortune and chance ?
 Mourn on, village mourners, my tears too shall flow,
 For the stranger we loved, the poor exile of France !

Oh ! kind was his nature, though bitter his fate,
 And gay was his converse, though broken his heart ;
 No comfort, no hope, his own breast could elate,
 Though comfort and hope he to all could impart.

Ever joyless himself, in the joys of the plain,
 The foremost was he mirth and pleasure to raise ;
 How sad was his woe, yet how blithe was his strain,
 When he sang the glad song of more fortunate days !

One pleasure he knew in his straw-cover'd shed
 The way-wearied traveller recruited to see ;
 One tear of delight he would drop o'er the bread
 Which he shared with the poor,—the still poorer than he.

And when round his death-bed profusely we cast
 Every gift, every solace our hamlet could bring,
 He blest us with sighs which we thought were his last,
 But he still breathed a prayer for his country and king.

Poor exile, adieu ! undisturb'd be thy sleep !
 From the feast, from the wake, from the village-green dance,
 How oft shall we wander at moon-light to weep
 O'er the stranger we loved, the poor exile of France !

To the church-bidden bride, shall thy memory impart
 One pang as her eyes on thy cold reliques glance ;
 One flower from her garland, one tear from her heart,
 Shall drop on the heart of the exile of France !

This is a country picture. In my own childhood, I knew many of the numerous colony which took refuge in London from the horrors of the first French Revolution. The lady at whose school I was educated (and he was so much the more efficient partner, that it was his school rather than hers), had married a Frenchman, who had been secretary to the Comte de Moustiers, one of the last ambassadors, if not the very last, from Louis Seize to the Court of St. James's. Of course he knew many emigrants of the highest rank, and indeed of all ranks ; and being a lively, kind-hearted man, with a liberal hand and a social temper, it was his delight to assemble as

many as he could of his poor countrymen and countrywomen around his hospitable supper-table. Something wonderful and admirable it was to see how these Dukes and Duchesses, Marshals and Marquises, Chevaliers and Bishops, bore up under their unparelleled reverses ! How they laughed, and talked, and squabbled, and flirted,—constant to their high heels, their rouge, and their furbelows, to their old liaisons, their polished sarcasms, their cherished rivalries ! The clung even to their *mariages de convenience* ; and the very habits which would most have offended our English notions, if we had seen them in their splendid hôtels of the Faubourg St. Germain, won tolerance and pardon when mixed up with such unaffected constancy and such cheerful resignation.

For the most part, these noble exiles had a trifling pecuniary dependency ; some had brought with them jewels enough to sustain them in their simple lodgings in Knightsbridge or Pentonville ; to some a faithful steward contrived to forward the produce of some estate, too small to have been seized by the early plunderers ; to others a rich English friend would claim the privilege of returning the kindness and hospitality of by-gone years. But very many lived literally on the produce of their own industry ; the gentlemen teaching languages, music, fencing, dancing ; whilst their wives and daughters went out as teachers or governesses, or supplied the shops with those objects of taste in millinery or artificial flowers for which their country is unrivalled. No one was ashamed of these exertions ; no one was proud of them. So perfect and so honest was the simplicity with which they entered upon this new course of life, that they did not even seem conscious of its merit. The hope of better days carried them gaily along, and the present evil was lost in the sunshiny future.

Here and there, however, the distress was too real, too pressing to be forgotten : in such cases, our good schoolmaster used to contrive all possible measures to assist and to relieve. One venerable couple I remember well. They bore one of the highest names of Brittany, and had possessed large estates, had lost their two sons, and were now, in their old age, their sickness, and their helplessness, almost entirely dependent upon the labour of Mdlle. Rose, their grand-daughter. Rose ! what a name for that pallid drooping creature, whose dark eyes looked too large for her face, whose bones seemed start-

ing through her skin, and whose black hair contrasted even fearfully with the wan complexion from which every tinge of healthful colour had long flown ! For some time these interesting persons regularly attended our worthy governess's supper parties, the objects of universal affection and respect. Each seemed to come for the sake of the other ; Mademoiselle, always bringing with her some ingenious straw-plaiting, to make into the fancy bonnets which were then in vogue, rarely raised her head from her work, or allowed herself time to make a hasty meal. It was sad to think how ceaseless must be the industry by which that fair and fragile creature could support the helpless couple who were cast upon her duty and her affection. At last they ceased to appear at the Wednesday parties ; and very soon after (oh ! it is the poor that help the poor !) we heard that the good Abbé Calonne (brother to the well-known minister) had undertaken, for a moderate stipend, the charge of the venerable Count and Countess ; while Mdlle. Rose, with her straw-plaiting, took up her abode in our school-room, working as indefatigably through our verbs and over our exercises as she had before done through the rattle of the tric-trac table and the ceaseless clatter of French talk.

Now, this school of ours was no worse than other schools—indeed, it was reckoned among the best conducted ; but, some way or other, the foul weed called exclusiveness had sprung up amongst the half-dozen great girls who, fifty years ago, “gave our little senate laws,” to a point that threatened to choke and destroy every plant of a more wholesome influence. Doubtless, long, long ago, the world and the world's trials, —prosperity, with the weariness and bitterness it brings,—adversity, with the joys it takes away,—have tamed those proud hearts ! But, at the time of which I speak, no committee of countesses, deciding upon petitions for vouchers for a subscription ball,—no chapter of noble canonesses, examining into the sixteen quarters required for their candidate.—could by possibility inquire more seriously into the nice questions of station, position, and alliance than the unfeudged younglings who constituted our first class. They were merely gentlemen's daughters, and had no earthly right to give themselves airs ; but I suspect that we may sometimes see in elder gentlewomen the same disproportion, and that those who might from birth, fortune and position, assume such a right,

will be the very last to exert their privilege. Luckily for me, I was a little girl, protected by my youth and insignificance from the danger of a contagion which it requires a good deal of moral courage to resist. I remember wondering how Mdlle. Rose, with her incessant industry, her open desire to sell her bonnets, and her shabby cotton gown, would escape from our censors. Happily, she was spared, avowedly because her birth was noble—perhaps because, with all their vulgar denunciations of vulgarity, their fineries, and their vanities, the young girls were better than they knew, and respected in their hearts the very humility which they denounced.

If, however, there were something about the fair French-woman that held in awe the spirit of girlish impertinence, chance soon bestowed upon them, in the shape of a new pupil, an object which called forth all their worst qualities, without stint and without impediment.

The poor child who was destined to become their victim was a short squat figure, somewhere about nine or ten years of age, awkward in her carriage, plain in her features, ill-dressed, and over-dressed. She happened to arrive at the same time with the French dancing-master, a Marquis of the *ancien régime*, of whom I am sorry to say, that he seemed so at home in his Terpsichorean vocation, that one could hardly fancy him fit for any other. (Were not *les Marquis* of the old French comedy very much like dancing-masters? I am sure Molière thought so.) At the same time with the French dancing-master did our new fellow-pupil arrive, led into the room by her father: he did not stay five minutes; but that time was long enough to strike Monsieur with a horror, evinced by a series of shrugs, which soon rendered the dislike reciprocal. I never saw such a contrast between two men. The Frenchman was slim, and long, and pale; and, allowing always for the dancing-master air, which in my secret soul I thought never could be allowed for, he might be called elegant. The Englishman was the beau-ideal of a John Bull—portentous in size broad, and red of visage; loud of tongue, and heavy in step; he shook the room as he strode, and made the walls echo when he spoke. I rather liked the man; there was so much character about him, and, in spite of the coarseness, so much that was bold and hearty. Monsieur shrugged, to be sure; but he seemed likely to run away, especially when

the stranger's first words conveyed an injunction to the lady of the house, "to take care that no grinning Frenchman had the ordering of his Betsy's feet. If she must learn to dance, let her be taught by an honest Englishman." After which declaration, kissing the little girl very tenderly, the astounding papa took his departure.

Poor Betsy ! there she sate, the tears trickling down her cheeks, little comforted by the kind notice of the governess and the English teacher, and apparently insensible to the silent scorn of her new companions. For my own part, I entertained towards her much of that pity which results from recent experience of the same sort of distress,—

"A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.

I was a little girl myself, abundantly shy and awkward, and I had not forgotten the heart-tug of leaving home, and the terrible loneliness of the first day at school. Moreover, I suspected that in one respect she was much more an object of compassion than myself ; I believed her to be motherless : so when I thought nobody was looking or listening, I made some girlish advances towards acquaintanceship, which she was still too shy or too miserable to return, so that, easily repelled myself, as a bashful child is, our intercourse came to nothing. With my elders and betters—the *cancan*, who ruled the school—Betsy stood, if possible, lower than ever. They had had the satisfaction to discover not only that he lived in the Borough, but that her father (horror of horrors !) was an eminent cheese-factor !—a seller of Stilton ! That he was very rich, and had a brother an alderman, rather made matters worse. Poor Betsy only escaped being sent to Coventry by the lucky circumstance of her going that metaphorical journey of her own accord, and never under any temptation speaking to anybody one unnecessary word.

As far as her lessons went, she was, from the false indulgence with which she had been treated, very backward for her age. Our school was, however, really excellent as a place of instruction ; so no studies were forced upon her, and she was left to get acquainted with the house and its ways, and to fall into the ranks as she could.

For the present she seemed to have attached herself to Mdlle. Rose, attracted probably by the sweetness of her

countenance, her sadness, and her silence. Her speech could not have attracted Betsy, for in common with many of her exiled countryfolk, she had not, in nearly ten years' residence in England, learned to speak five English words. But something had won her affection. She had, on first being called by the governess, from the dark corner in which she had ensconced herself, crept to the side of the young French-woman, had watched her as he wove her straw plaits, had attempted the simple art with some discarded straws that lay scattered upon the floor ; and when Mademoiselle so far roused herself as to show her the proper way, and to furnish her with the material, she soon became a most efficient assistant in this branch of industry.

No intercourse took place between them. Indeed, as I have said, none was possible, since neither knew a word of the other's language. Betsy was Silence personified ; and poor Mdlle. Rose, always pensive and reserved, was now more than ever dejected and oppressed. An opportunity of returning to France had opened to her and was passing away. She herself was too young to be included in the list of emigrants, and interest had been made with the First Consul for the re-admission of her venerable parents, and perhaps for the ultimate recovery of some property still unsold. But her grandfather was so aged, and her grandmother so sickly, that the expenses of a voyage and a journey, then very formidable to the old and the infirm, were beyond her means, beyond even her hopes. So she sighed over her straw-plaiting, and submitted.

In the meantime the second Saturday arrived, and with it a summons home to Betsy, who, for the first time gathering courage to address our good governess, asked "if she might be trusted with the bonnet Mdlle. Rose had just finished, to show her aunt—she knew she would like to buy that bonnet, because Mademoiselle had been so good as to let her assist in plaiting it." How she came to know that they were for sale nobody could tell ; but our kind governess ordered the bonnet to be put into the carriage, told her the price—(no extravagant one)—called her a good child, and took leave of her till Monday.

Two hours after, Betsy and her father reappeared in the schoolroom. "Ma'amselle," said he, bawling as loud as he could, with the view, as we afterwards conjectured, of making

her understand him—"Ma'amselle, I have no great love for the French, whom I take to be our natural enemies. But you're a good young woman ; you've been kind to my Betsy, and have taught her how to make your fallals ; and moreover you're a good daughter, and so's my Betsy. She says that she thinks you're fretting because you can't manage to take your grandfather and grandmother back to France again ; so as you let her help you in that other handiwork, why you must let her help you in this." Then throwing a heavy purse into her lap, catching his little daughter up in his arms, and hugging her to the honest breast where she hid her tears and her blushes, he departed, leaving poor Mdlle. Rose too much bewildered to speak, or to comprehend the happiness that had fallen upon her, and the whole school the better for the lesson.

XXI.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DRAMATIC AUTHORS.

PASSION FOR THE DRAMA.

COLLEY CIBBER—RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

Of all literary fascinations there is none like that of the Drama, written or acted. None that begins so early, or that lasts so long.

With regard to actors, it is a sort of possession by evil spirits. Boys and girls from the schoolroom, and the counting-house, the shop-board, or the college, rush upon the stage, forsaking home and comfort, and the thousand realities of life, in chase of the phantom, Fame. And in authorship, the passion, although not perhaps so common, is hardly less engrossing, or less destructive. The "Honeymoon," one of the most delightful of modern comedies, was the seventh play presented by poor Tobin to different managers. He died, I believe, the very same night that it was performed with unrivalled success, certainly before the intelligence of its triumph could reach him. Gerald Griffin was even less fortunate. "Gisippus" was rejected on all hands, and only produced after his death, and after the destruction of his other tragedies, to secure for

its author a posthumous reputation. Many, no doubt, more unfortunate still, have died and left no name ; and many may still exist, dragging after them a weary weight of hope deferred, and genius unrecognised.

I have some right to talk of the love of the drama, the passionate, absorbing, worshipping love, since it took possession of me at the earliest age, and clung to me long. Nay, I am not even now absolutely sure, that if the Cruvellis and the Viardots would but say instead of sing,—if we might but see in tragedy the dramatic power lavished upon opera, I might not be simple enough to take up once more my old enthusiasm, and haunt the theatres at sixty-five ! Luckily, the age is a musical age, and there is small danger that any Queen of Song should exchange her notes for words—especially in a country where the notes of a prima donna are synonymous with bank-notes.

The first play I remember to have seen was in a barn—tragedy, of course—the tragedy dear to heroes of the buskin, and no less dear to their youthful auditors, “Richard the Third.” Ah ! I should have asked nothing better than to see Richard murdered in that barn every night ! Then came other playgoings more legitimate ; and readings of Shakespeare by bits, and here and there, I scarcely know how or when. For it may be reckoned amongst the best and dearest of our English privileges, that we are all more or less educated in Shakespeare ; that the words and thoughts of the greatest of poets are, as it were, engrafted into our minds, and must, to a certain extent, enrich and fructify the most barren stock. Shakespeare came to me I cannot tell how. But my first great fit of dramatic reading was, I am ashamed to say, of very questionable origin : a stolen pleasure ; and therefore—alas ! for our poor sinful human nature !—therefore by very far more dear.

This is the story.

My childhood was, as I have elsewhere said, a very happy one ; scarcely less happy in the great London school where I passed the five years between ten years old and fifteen, than at home : to tell the truth, I was well nigh as much spoilt in one place as in the other ; but as I was a quiet and orderly little girl, and fell easily into the rules of the house, there was no great harm done, either to me or to the school discipline.

One exception, however, did exist, both to my felicity and to my obedience, and that one might be comprised in the single word—Music.

How my father, who certainly never knew the tune of "God save the King" from that of the other national air, "Rule, Britannia," came to take into his head so strong a fancy to make me an accomplished musician I could never rightly understand, but that such a fancy did possess him I found to my sorrow! From the day I was five years old, he stuck me up to the piano, and, although teacher after teacher had discovered that I had neither ear, nor taste, nor application, he continued fully bent upon my learning it. By the time my London education commenced, it had assumed the form of a fixed idea.

The regular master employed in the school was Mr. Hook (father of Theodore), then a popular composer of Vauxhall songs, and an instructor of average ability. A large smooth-faced man he was, good-natured and civil spoken; but failing, as in my case everybody else had failed, to produce the slightest improvement, my father, not much struck by his appearance or manner, decided as usual that the fault lay with the teacher; and happening one day to fall in with a very clever little German professor, who was giving lessons to two of my schoolfellows, he at once took me from the tuition of Mr. Hook, and placed me under that of Herr Schuberl, who, an impatient, irritable man of genius, very speedily avenged the cause of his rival music-master, by dismissing in her turn the unlucky pupil.

Things being in this unpromising state, I began to entertain some hope that my musical education would be given up altogether. In this expectation I did injustice to my father's pertinacity. This time he threw the blame upon the instrument; and, because I could make nothing after eight years' thumping upon the pianoforte, resolved that I should become a great performer upon the harp.

It so happened that our school-house (the same, by the way, in which poor Miss Landon passed the greater part of her life), forming one angle of an irregular octagon place, was so built that the principal reception-room was connected with the entrance-hall by a long passage and two double doors. This room, fitted up with nicely-bound books, con-

tained, amongst other musical instruments, the harp, upon which I was sent to practise every morning ; sent alone, most comfortably out of sight and hearing of every individual in the house, the only means of approach being through two resounding green baize doors, swinging to with a heavy bang the moment they were let go ; so that the change from piano to harp, and from the impulsive Herr Schuberl to the prim, demure little Miss Essex, my new music-mistress, had by no means worked the miracle of producing in me any love of that detestable art, I very shortly betook myself to the book-shelves, and seeing a row of octavo volumes lettered "Théâtre de Voltaire," I selected one of them and had deposited it in front of the music-stand, and perched myself upon the stool to read it in less time than an ordinary pupil would have consumed in getting through the first three bars of "Ar Hyd y Nos."

The play upon which I opened was "Zaire." "Zaire" is not "Richard the Third," any more than M. de Voltaire is Shakespeare : nevertheless, the play has its merits. There is a certain romance in the situation ; an interest in the story ; a mixture of Christian piety and Oriental fervour, which strikes the imagination. So I got through "Zaire," and when I had finished "Zaire," I proceeded to other plays—"Œdipe," "Mérope," "Alzire," "Mahomet," plays well worth reading, but not so absorbing as to prevent my giving due attention to the warning doors, and putting the book in its place, and striking the chords of "Ar Hyd y Nos," as often as I heard a step approaching ; or gathering up myself and my music, and walking quietly back to the school-room as soon as the hour for practice had expired.

But when the dramas of Voltaire were exhausted, and I had recourse to some neighbouring volumes, the state of matters changed at once. The new volumes contained the comedies of Molière, and, once plunged into the gay realities of his delightful world, all the miseries of this globe of ours—harp, music-books, practisings, and lessons—were forgotten ; Miss Essex melted into thin air ; "Ar Hyd y Nos" became a nonentity. I never recollect that there was such a thing as time : I never heard the warning doors ; the only tribulations that troubled me were the tribulations of "Sganarelle ;" the only lessons I thought about—the lessons of the "Bour-

geois Gentilhomme." So I was caught ; caught in the very fact of laughing till I cried, over the apostrophies of the angry father to the galley, in which he is told his son has been taken captive. "Que diable alloit-il faire dans cette galère !" The apostrophe comes true with regard to somebody in a scrape during every moment of every day, and was never more applicable than to myself at that instant.

Luckily, however, a person who discovered my delinquency was one of my chief spoilers, the husband of our good school-mistress, himself a Frenchman, an adorer of the great dramatist of France, and no worshipper of music. He was also a very clever man, with a strong and just conviction that no proficiency in any art could be gained without natural qualifications and sincere good will. Accordingly, when he could speak for laughing, what he did say sounded far more like a compliment upon my relish for the comic drama than a rebuke. I suppose that he spoke to the same effect to my father. At all events, the issue of the affair was the dismissal of the poor little harp-mistress, and a present of a cheap edition of Molière for my own reading. I have got the set still—twelve little foreign-looking books, unbound, but covered with a gay-looking pink paper, mottled with red, like certain carnations.

Such was my first regular, or rather irregular, introduction to the delightful world of the written drama. Since then I have read in the originals, or in such translations as I could lay my hands upon, the plays of almost every country, from the grand tragedy of the Greeks (perhaps, next to Shakespeare and Molière, the finest drama that exists), down to Claudio, the charming French pastoral, which fell in my way last month.

Besides the plays themselves, the history of their writers has always had for me a singular attraction, especially when such histories have been written by themselves.

Colley Cibber, one of the earliest of these dramatic auto-biographers, is also one of the most amusing. He flourished in wig and embroidery, player, poet, and manager, during the Augustan age of Queen Anne, somewhat earlier and somewhat later. A most egregious fop according to all accounts he was, but a very pleasant one notwithstanding, as your fop of parts is apt to be. Pope gained but little in the warfare he waged with him, for this plain reason, that the great poet

accuses his adversary of dulness, which was not by any means one of his sins, instead of selecting one of the numerous faults, such as pertness, petulance, and presumption, of which he was really guilty.

His best book, the "Apology for his Life," shows that he was a keen observer and a pleasant describer of his brother actors. My first extract is taken from a higher stage, and is one of the many graphic touches that give us so complete and personal a knowledge of the Merry Monarch, and makes us almost partakers of the kindness which (unjustly, I suppose) was felt towards him by his subjects.

"In February, 1684-5, died King Charles II., who being the only king I had ever seen, I remember, young as I was, his death made a strong impression upon me, as it drew tears from the eyes of multitudes who looked no farther into him than I did. But what, perhaps, gave King Charles this peculiar possession of so many hearts was his affable and easy manner in conversing, which is a quality that goes farther with the greater part of mankind than many higher virtues which in a prince might more immediately regard the public prosperity. Even his indolent amusement of playing with his dogs, and feeding his ducks in St. James's Park (which I have seen him do), made the common people adore him."

The allusion in the next passage is probably to Titus Oates:—

"The inferior actors took occasion, whenever they appeared as bravoes or murderers, to make themselves appear as frightful and inhuman figures as possible. In King Charles's time, this low skill was carried to such an extravagance, that the King himself, who was black-browed and of a swarthy complexion, passed a pleasant remark upon his observing the grim looks of the murderers in 'Macbeth,' when turning to his people in the box about him, 'Pray what is the meaning,' said he, 'that we never see a rogue in a play, but odds fish ! they always clap him on a black periwig, when it is well known one of the greatest rogues in England always wears a fair one ?'"

Here are some vivid portraits of actors.

"This actor (Sandford) in his manner of speaking varied very much from those I have already mentioned. His voice

had an acute and piercing tone, which struck every syllable of his words distinctly upon the ear. He had likewise a peculiar skill in his way of marking out to an audience whatever he judged worth their more than ordinary notice. When he delivered a command, he would sometimes give it more force by seeming to slight the ornament of harmony. * * * Had Sandford lived in Shakespeare's time, I am confident his judgment would have chosen him above all other actors to have played his Richard III. I leave his person out of the question, which though naturally made for it, yet that would have been the least part of his recommendation. Sandford had stronger claims to it. He had sometimes an uncouth stateliness in his motion, a harsh and sullen pride of speech, a meditating brow, a stern aspect, occasionally changing into an almost ludicrous triumph over all goodness and virtue ; from thence falling into the most persuasive gentleness and soothing candour of a designing heart. These, I say, must have preferred him to it."

* * * * *

"Nokes was an actor of a quite different genius from any I have ever read, heard of, or seen, since or before his time ; and yet his general excellence may be comprehended in one article, viz., a plain and palpable simplicity of nature, which was so utterly his own, that he was often as unaccountably diverting in his common speech as on the stage. I saw him once giving an account of some table-talk to another actor behind the scenes, which a man of quality accidentally listening to, was so deceived by his manner, that he asked him if that was a new play he was rehearsing. * * * He scarce ever made his first entrance in a play but he was received with an involuntary applause, not of hands only, but by a general laughter, which the sight of him provoked and nature could not resist ; yet the louder the laugh, the graver was his look upon it ; and even the ridiculous solemnity of his features was enough to have set a whole bench of bishops into a titter, could he have been honoured with such grave and right reverend auditors. In the ludicrous distresses which by the laws of comedy folly is often involved in, he sunk into such a mixture of piteous pusillanimity and a consternation so ruefully ridiculous and inconsolable, that when he had shook you to a fatigued of laughter it became a moot point whether you ought not to

have pitied him. When he debated any matter by himself, he would shut up his mouth with a dumb, studious pout, and roll his full eye into such a vacant amazement, such a palpable ignorance of what to think of it, that his silent perplexity gave your imagination as full content as the most absurd thing he could say upon it. * * * His person was of the middle size ; his voice clear and audible ; his natural countenance grave and sober. In some of his low characters that became it he had a shuffling shamble in his gait, with so contented an ignorance in his aspect, and such an awkward absurdity in his gesture, that had you not known him, you could not believe that naturally he had a grain of common sense."

Nature sometimes reproduces herself. There is much in this description to remind us of the late Mr. Liston. The following observations upon the great tragedian Betterton's personation of Hamlet are in the best style of dramatic criticism :—

" You may have seen a Hamlet, perhaps, who on the first appearance of his father's spirit has thrown himself into all the straining vociferation requisite to express rage and fury ; and the house has thundered applause, though the misguided actor was all the while tearing a passion into rags. The late Mr. Addison, whilst I sate by him to see this scene acted, made the same observation, asking me with some surprise if I thought Hamlet should be in so violent a passion with the ghost, which, though it might have astonished, had not provoked him. For you may observe that in this beautiful speech the passion never rises beyond an almost breathless astonishment, or an impatience limited only by filial reverence to inquire into the suspected wrongs that may have raised him from his peaceful tomb, and a desire to know what a spirit so seemingly distressed might wish or enjoin a sorrowful son to execute towards his future quiet in the grave. This was the light into which Betterton threw this scene, which he opened with a pause of mute amazement ; then rising slowly to a solemn, trembling voice, he made the ghost equally terrible to the spectator as to himself ; and in the descriptive part of the natural emotions which the ghostly vision gave him, the boldness of his expostulation was still governed by decency—manly, but not braving—his voice never rising into that seeming outrage or wild defiance of what he naturally revered."

The book is full of pictures like this :—

“ In the solemn formality of Obadiah in ‘ The Committee,’ he (Underhill) seemed the immovable log he stood for ; a countenance of wood could not be more fixed than his when the blockhead of a character required it. His face was full and long ; from his crown to the end of his nose, was the shorter half it ; so that the disproportion of his lower features, when soberly composed with an unwandering eye hanging over them, threw him into the most lumpish, moping mortal that ever made beholders merry.”

Little bits of truth like this are also plentiful :—

“ From whence I would observe, that the short life of beauty is not long enough to form a complete actress.”

Colley Cibber survived to his eighty-seventh year, retaining to the last the companionable qualities which had made his society coveted by persons of all ranks, and dying without decay and without pain.

Richard Cumberland is another vivacious specimen of dramatic authorship—more vivacious in his “ Life ” (I mean his printed life) than on the stage. Son of a popular and amiable bishop, grandson of the very learned but unpopular and unamiable scholar, Dr. Bentley, he competed successfully at Cambridge for the honours of the University, took a high degree, obtained a Fellowship of Trinity, and might, probably, have attained to his grandfather’s station as head of that eminent College, had he not been tempted by Lord Halifax to accept the post of his private secretary, a career for which the eminently irritable and susceptible temper, which Sheridan has devoted to a cruel immortality in his *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, rendered him eminently unfit.

It was, however, a very good position for seeing the world, and becoming acquainted with men of high name and various character.

This is his first impression of Garrick as an actor. The play was “ *The Fair Penitent*. ”

“ Quin presented himself, upon the rising of the curtain, in a green velvet coat, embroidered down the seams, an enormous full-bottomed periwig, rolled stockings, and high-heeled, square-toed shoes ; with very little variation of cadence, and in a deep, full tone, accompanied by a sawing kind of action, which had more of the senate than the stage in it, he rolled out his

heroics with an air of dignified indifference that seemed to disdain the plaudits that were showered upon him—Mrs. Cibber, in a key high pitched, but sweet withal, sang, or rather recitatively, Rowe's harmonious strain. But when, after long and eager expectation, I first beheld little Garrick, then young and light, and alive in every muscle and in every feature, come bounding on the stage, and pointing at the wittol Altamont and the heavy-paced Horatio (Heavens, what a transition!) it seemed as if a whole century had been swept over in the space of a single scene ; old things were done away, and a new order at once brought forward bright and luminous, and clearly destined to dispel the barbarisms and bigotry of a tasteless age, too long attached to the prejudices of custom, and superstitiously devoted to the illusions of imposing declamation."

His first introduction to official life was little to his taste.

" The morning after my arrival, I waited on Mr. Pownall at his office in Whitehall, and was received by him with all possible politeness, but in a style of such ceremony and form as I was little used to, and not much delighted with. How many young men at my time of life would have embraced this situation with rapture. The whole town indeed was before me, but it had not for me either friend or relation to whom I could resort for comfort or for counsel. With a head filled with Greek and Latin, and a heart left behind me in my college, I was completely out of my element. I saw myself unlike the people about me, and was embarrassed in circles, which, according to the manners of those days, were not to be approached without a set of ceremonies and manœuvres not very pleasant to perform, and when awkwardly performed, not very edifying to behold. In these graces Lord Halifax was a model ; his address was noble and imposing ; he could never be mistaken for less than he was, whilst his official secretary Pownall, who egregiously overacted his imitations of him, could as little be mistaken for more than he was."

One of his happiest characters is that of Bubb Dodington.

" His town house in Pall Mall, his villa at Hammersmith, and his mansion in the country, were such establishments as few nobles in the nation were possessed of. In either of these he was not to be approached but through a suite of apartments, and rarely seated but under painted ceilings and gilt entablatures. In this villa you were conducted through two

rows of antique statues, ranged in a gallery floored with the rarest marbles, and enriched with columns of granite and lapis-lazuli ; his saloon was hung with the finest Gobelin tapestry, and he slept in a bed encanopied with peacocks' feathers, in the style of Mrs. Montagu. When he passed from Pall Mall to La Trappe, it was always in a coach, which I could suspect had been his ambassadorial equipage at Madrid, drawn by six fat, unwieldy black horses, short docked, and of colossal dignity. Neither was he less characteristic in apparel than in equipage. He had a wardrobe loaded with rich and glaring suits, each in itself a load to the wearer : and of these I have no doubt but many were coeval with his embassy above mentioned, and every birth-day had added to the stock. In doing this he so contrived as never to put his old dresses out of countenance by any variation of the fashion of the new. In the meantime his bulk and corpulence gave full display to a vast expanse and profusion of brocade and embroidery ; and this, when set off with an enormous tie periwig and deep-laced ruffles, gave the picture of an ancient courtier in his gala habit, or Quin in his stage dress. Nevertheless it must be confessed this style, though out of date, was not out of character, but harmonized so well with the person of the wearer, that I remember, when he made his first speech in the House of Peers as Lord Melcombe, all the flashes of his wit, all the studied phrases and well-timed periods of his rhetoric lost their effects, simply because the orator had laid aside his magisterial tie, and put on a modern bag wig, which was as much out of costume upon the broad expanse of his shoulders as a cue would have been upon the robes of the Lord Chief Justice.

" Having thus dilated more, perhaps, than I should have done, upon this distinguished person's passion for magnificence and display, when I proceed to inquire into those principles of good taste which should naturally have been the accompaniments and directors of that magnificence, I fear I must be compelled by truth to admit that in these he was deficient. Of pictures he seemed to take his estimate only by their cost : in fact, he was not possessed of any ; but I recollect his saying to me one day in his great saloon at Eastbury, that if he had half a score pictures of a thousand pounds a-piece, he would gladly decorate his walls with them ; in

place of which, I am sorry to say, he had stuck up immense patches of gilt leather shaped into bugle-horns, upon hangings of rich crimson velvet ; and round his state bed he displayed a carpeting of gold and silver embroidery, which too glaringly betrayed its derivation from coat, waistcoat, and breeches, by the testimony of pockets, button-holes, and loops, with other equally incontrovertible witnesses subpœnaed from the tailor's shopboard."

Lord Halifax is sent as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland ; to which we owe the following portrait of a great celebrity of Dublin :—

" I had more than once the amusement of dining at the house of that most singular being, George Faulkner ; where I found myself in a company so miscellaneous and whimsically classed, that it looked more like a fortuitous concourse of oddities jumbled together from all ranks, orders, and descriptions, than the effect of invitation and design. Description must fall short in the attempt to convey any sketch of that eccentric being to those who have not read him in the pages of Jephson, or seen him in the mimicry of Foote, who, in his portraits of Faulkner, found the only sitter whom his extravagant pencil could not caricature ; for he had a solemn intrepidity of egotism and a daring contempt of absurdity that fairly out-faced imitation, and like Garrick's 'Ode on Shakespeare,' which Johnson said defied criticism, so did George, in the original spirit of his own perfect buffonery, defy caricature. He never deigned to join in the laugh that he had raised, nor seemed to have a feeling of the ridicule he had provoked. At the same time that he was pre-eminently and by preference the butt and buffoon of the company, he could find openings for hits of retaliation, which were such left-handed thrusts as few could parry. Nobody could foresee where they would fall—nobody, of course, was fore-armed ; and as there was in his calculation but one super-eminent character in the kingdom of Ireland, and he the printer of the 'Dublin Journal,' there was no shield against George's arrows, which flew where he listed, and hit or missed as chance directed, he cared not about consequences.

" He gave good meat and excellent claret in abundance ; I sate at his table once from dinner till two in the morning, while George swallowed immense potations, with one solitary

sodden strawberry in the bottom of the glass, which he said was recommended to him for its cooling properties. He never lost his recollection or equilibrium the whole time, and was in excellent foolery. It was a singular coincidence, that there was a person in company who had received his reprieve at the gallows, and the very judge who had passed sentence of death upon him. This did not in the least disturb the harmony of the society, nor embarrass any human creature present. All went off perfectly smooth ; and George, adverting to an original portrait of Dean Swift, which hung in the room, told us abundance of excellent and interesting anecdotes of the Dean and himself, with minute precision and an importance irresistibly ludicrous. There was also a portrait of his late lady, Mrs. Faulkner, which either made the painter or George a liar ; for it was frightfully ugly, whilst he swore she was the most divine object in creation. George prosecuted Foote for lampooning him on the stage of Dublin. His counsel, the Prime-Serjeant, compared him to Socrates, and his libeller to Aristophanes. This, I believe, was all that George got by his course of law : but he was told he had the best of the bargain in the comparison, and sate contented under the shadow of his laurels."

The account of Soame Jenyns is no less happy.

"A disagreement about a name or a date will mar the best story that ever was put together. Sir Joshua Reynolds, luckily, could not hear an interrupter of this sort ; Johnson would not hear, or, if he heard, would not heed him. Soame Jenyns heard him, heeded him, set him right, and took up his tale where he had left it, without any diminution of its humour, adding only a few more twists to his snuff-box, a few more taps on the lid of it, with a preparatory grunt or two, the invariable forerunner of the amenity that was at the heels of them. He was the man who bore his part in all societies with the most even temper and undisturbed hilarity of any man I ever knew. He came into your house at the very moment you had put upon your card ; he dressed himself, to do your party honour, in all the colours of the jay ; his lace, indeed, had long since lost its lustre, but his coat had faithfully retained its cut since the days when gentlemen wore embroidered figured velvets, with short sleeves, high cuffs, and buckram skirts. As Nature had cast him in the exact

mould of an ill-made pair of stiff stays, he followed her so close in the fashion of his coat, that it was doubted if he did not wear them ; because he had a protuberant wen just under his poll, he wore a wig that did not cover above half his head. His eyes were protruded like the eyes of the lobster, who wears them at the end of his feelers ; and yet there was room between one of these and his nose for another wen, that added nothing to his beauty. Yet I heard this good man very innocently remark, when Gibbon published his history, that he wondered anybody so ugly could write a book.

“ Such was the exterior of a man who was the charm of the circle, and gave a zest to every company he came into. His pleasantry was of a sort peculiar to himself ; it harmonized with everything ; it was like the bread to your dinner—you did not, perhaps, make it the whole or principal part of your meal, but it was an admirable and wholesome auxiliary to your other viands. Soame Jenyns told you no long stories, engrossed not much of your attention, and was not angry with those who did. His thoughts were original, and were apt to have a very whimsical affinity to the paradox in them. There was a terseness in his repartees that had a play of words as well as of thought ; as, when speaking of the difference of laying out money upon land, or purchasing into the funds, he said, ‘ One was principal without interest, and the other interest without principal.’ ”

Although the serious part of “ The Wheel of Fortune”—that is to say, the whole character of Penruddock—is admirably conceived and admirably written (the recollection of John Kemble in that play can never be erased), Mr. Cumberland’s power seemed to desert him whenever he attempted tragedy or verse of any sort. His lines on “ Affectation,” which have great merit, form the only exception that I remember to this assertion : certainly his epic of “ Calvary” does not ; neither does his share in the “ Richard Cœur de Lion” of Sir James Bland Burgess.

AFFECTATION.

Why, Affectation, why this mock grimace ?
Go, silly thing, and hide that simpering face !
Thy lisping prattle, and thy mincing gait,
All thy false mimic fooleries I hate ;
For those are Folly’s counterfeit, and she
Who is right foolish, hath the better plea :

Nature's true idiot I prefer to thee.
 Why that soft languish? Why that drawing tone?
 Art sick? art sleepy?—Get thee hence: begone!
 I laugh at all those pretty baby tears,
 Those flutterings, faintings, and unreal fears.
 Can they deceive us? Can such mummeries move,
 Touch us with pity, or inspire with love?
 No, Affectation, vain is all thy art,
 Those eyes may wander over every part,
 They'll never find their passage to the heart.

A great part of Mr. Cumberland's amusing work is taken up by an account of his disastrous mission in Spain, which, undefined in its object, and unsuccessful in its result, brought nothing but disappointment to the Government or the negotiator. After his return from Madrid, he fell back upon literature, and closed a long and varied life, in an advanced age, at Tunbridge Wells.

XXII.

FEMALE POETS.

MRS. CLIVE, MRS. ACTON TINDAL, MISS DAY, MRS. ROBERT DERING,

THERE never was a more remarkable contrast between the temperament of the poetess and the temperament of the woman, than that which exists between the thoughtful gravity, the almost gloomy melancholy that characterise the writings of that celebrated initial letter, the "V." of "Blackwood's Magazine," and the charming, cheerful, light-hearted lady, known as Mrs. Clive. This discrepancy has been acknowledged before now to exist between the tastes and the tempers of nations. The French, in their old day, before this last revolution, perhaps before any of their revolutions, the French of our old traditions and our old travellers, the Sternes and the Goldsmiths, with their Watteau pageantries, their dances in the open air, and their patient love of the deepest and most unmingled tragedy, afforded a notable instance of this contrast. But that which is observable in Mrs. Clive's case is still more striking. I have never known any creature half so cheerful. Happy sister, happy mother, happy wife, she even bears the burden of a large fortune and a great house without the slightest diminution of the delightful animal spirits, which

always seem to me to be of her many gifts the choicest. Moreover, enjoyment seems to be her mode of thankfulness ; as, not content with being happy herself, she has a trick of making everybody happy that comes near her. I do not know how she contrives it, but such is the effect. There is no resisting the contagious laughter of those dancing eyes.

As, however, everybody that thinks deeply, as she does, must have some moments of sadness, she is content to put them into her writings : sometimes in prose, for her "Story of the Great Drought" has an intensity of tragic power, a realisation of impossible horrors, such as gave their fascination to the best works of Godwin ; sometimes in verse, where the depth of thought and fearless originality of treatment, frequently redeem the commonest subject from anything like commonplace. Here is an example :—

THE GRAVE.

I stood within the grave's o'ershadowing vault ;
Gloomy and damp, it stretched its vast domain ;
Shades were its boundary ; for my strained eye sought
For other limits to its width in vain.

Faint from the entrance came a daylight ray,
And distant sound of living men and things ;
This, in the encountering darkness passed away,
That, took the tone in which a mourner sings.

I lit a torch at a sepulchral lamp,
Which shot a thread of light amid the gloom ;
And feebly burning 'gainst the rolling damp,
I bore it through the regions of the tomb.

Around me stretched the slumbers of the dead,
Whereof the silence ached upon mine ear ;
More and more noiseless did I note my tread,
And yet its echoes chilled my heart with fear.

The former men of every age and place,
From all their wanderings, gathered round me lay ;
The dust of withered empires did I trace,
And stood mid generations passed away.

I saw whole cities, that in flood or fire,
Or famine, or the plague, gave up their breath ;
Whole armies, whom a day beheld expire,
Swept by ten thousands to the arms of death.

I saw the Old World's white and wave-swept bones,
A giant heap of creatures that had been ;
Far and confused the broken skeletons
Lay strewn beyond mine eyes' remotest ken.

Death's various shrines—the urn, the stone, the lamp—
 Were scattered round confused amid the dead ;
 Symbols and types were mouldering in the damp,
 Their shapes were wanting and their meaning fled.

Unspoken tongues, perchance in praise or woe,
 Were chronicled on tablets Time had swept ;
 And deep were half their letters hid below
 The thick, small dust of those they once had wept.

No hand was here to wipe the dust away ;
 No reader of the writing traced beneath ;
 No spirit sitting by its form of clay ;
 No sigh nor sound from all the heaps of death.

One place alone had ceased to hold its prey ;
 A form had pressed it and was there no more ;
 The garments of the grave beside it lay,
 Where once they wrapped **HIM** on the rocky floor.

HE only with returning footsteps broke
 The eternal calm with which the tomb was bound ;
 Among the sleeping dead alone **HE** woke
 And blessed with outstretched hands the host around.

Well is it that such blessing hovers here,
 To soothe each sad survivor of the throng
 Who haunt the portals of the solemn sphere,
 And pour their woe the loaded air along.

They to the verge have followed what they love,
 And on the insuperable threshold stand ;
 With cherished names its speechless calm reprove,
 And stretch in the abyss their ungrasped hand.

But vainly there they seek their soul's relief,
 And of the obdurate Grave its prey implore ;
 Till death himself shall medicine their grief,
 Closing their eyes by those they met before.

All that have died, the earth's whole race, repose
 Where Death collects his treasures, heap on heap
 O'er each one's busy day the nightshades close ;
 Its actors, sufferers, schools, kings, armies—sleep.

It would be difficult to frame a better wish for the writer and the woman, than that both may remain unchanged—that the shadow may still cast its deep and thoughtful veil over the poetry and the sunshine, and the blessing rest upon the life !

The exact reverse of Mrs. Clive may be found in Mrs. Acton Tindal, whose verse, so free, so buoyant, so firm and so graceful, derives most of its charms from its resemblance to the sweet and lovely creature by whom it was written. There is a sparkling vividness in her style which has the life

and colour of painting. The very choice of her subjects is picturesque. With an extent and variety of reading, remarkable even now in one of the youngest of our female writers, she instinctively fixes upon some theme of processional grace and beauty, and throws all the truth and tenderness of her sentiment around figures already interesting by historical association. "The Infant Bridal" might be transferred to canvas without altering a word.

"Richard Duke of York, second son of Edward IV., was married to Anne Mowbray, Duchess of Norfolk in her own right. The bridegroom was not five years old, and the bride scarcely three. The ceremony was performed in St. Stephen's Chapel, A. D. 1477."

The sunbeams of the early day
 Streamed through the lattice grim,
 And up the dark aisle's pillared way
 Swelled loud the nuptial hymn ;
 And passed along a gorgeous band
 Of courtly dames and fair,
 Of belted barons of the land
 The bravest best were there.

But slowly moved the bright array,
 For gently at its head
 Two blooming children led the way
 With short and doubtful tread :
 The fair boy-bridegroom and the bride
 (Like Cupid's train in eld),
 Meekly and loving, side by side,
 Each other's hands they held.

Half pleased and half surprised they seemed,
 For in each kindred eye
 Love mixed with pity fondly gleamed,
 And mournful gravity.
 A fear, for them who knew no fear,
 On each heart darkly fell ;
 They view life's future through a tear
 Who know the past too well.

The bridegroom bore a royal crown
 Amid the shining hair,
 That like a golden veil fell down
 In tresses soft and fair.
 The bearing of the noble child
 His princely lineage told,
 Beneath that brow so smooth and mild
 The blood of warriors rolled.

All coyly went the sweet babe-bride,
 Yet oft with simple grace,
 She raised, soft-stepping by his side,
 Her dark eyes to his face.
 And playfellows who loved her well
 Crowns of white roses bore,
 And lived in after years to tell
 The infant bridal o'er.

Then words of import strange and deep
 The hoary prelate said,
 And some had turned away to weep,
 And many bowed the head.
 Their steady gaze those children meek
 Upon the old man bent,
 As earnestly they seemed to seek
 The solemn word's intent.

Calm in the blest simplicity
 That never woke to doubt ;
 Calm in the holy purity
 Whose presence bars shame out !
 Then turned they from each troubled brow,
 And many a downcast eye,
 And gazed upon each other now
 In wondering sympathy ;
 And nestled close, with looks of love,
 Upon the altar's stone ;
 Such ties as Seraphs bind above
 These little ones might own.
 And sweetly was the babe-bride's cheek
 Against the fair boy pressed,
 All reverent, yet so fond and meek,
 As kneeling to be blest.

Then smiled they on their grand array
 And went forth hand in hand,
 Well pleased to keep high holiday
 Amid that gorgeous band.
 Alas ! for those that early wed
 With such prophetic gloom,
 For sadly fell on each young head
 The shadow of the tomb.

Scarce had the blossoms died away
 Of the rose-wreaths they wore.
 When to her mouldering ancestry
 The little bride they bore.
 Her marriage garlands o'er her bier,
 Bedewed with tears, were cast ;
 And still she smiled as though no fear
 O'erclouded her at last.

A life as short, and darker doom,
 The gentle boy befel :
 He slept not in his father's tomb,
 For him was heard no knell !
 One stifling pang amid his sleep
 And the dark vale was passed !
 He woke with those who've ceased to weep,
 Whose sun is ne'er o'ercast.

A garland floats around the throne,
 Entwined by angel hands,
 Of such fair earth-buds, newly blown,
 Culled from a thousand lands,
 A melody most pure and sweet
 Unceasingly they sing,
 And blossoms o'er the mercy-seat,
 The loved babe-angels fling !

I have now to introduce another fair artist into the female gallery of which I am so proud ; an artist, whose works seem to me to bear the same relation to sculpture that those of Mrs. Acton Tindal do to painting. The poetry of Miss Day is statuesque in its dignity, in its purity, in its repose. Purity is perhaps the distinguishing quality of this fine writer, pervading the conception, the thoughts, and the diction. But she must speak for herself. As "The Infant Bridal" might form a sketch for an historical picture, so "Charlotte Corday" is a model, standing ready to be chiselled in Parian stone.

Stately and beautiful and chaste,
 Forth went the dauntless maid,
 Her blood to yield, her youth to waste,
 That carnage might be stayed.
 This solemn purpose filled her soul,
 There was no room for fear,
 She heard the cry of vengeance roll
 Prophetic on her ear.
 She thought to stem the course of crime
 By one appalling deed,
 She knew to perish in her prime
 Alone would be her meed.
 No tremor shook her woman's breast,
 No terror blanched her brow,
 She spoke, she smiled, she took her rest,
 And hidden held her vow.
 She mused upon her country's wrong,
 Upon the tyrant's guilt,
 Her settled purpose grew more strong
 As blood was freshly spilt :

What though the fair smooth hand were slight!—

It grasped the sharpened steel;
A triumph flashed before her sight
The death that it should deal.

She sought her victim in his den—

The tiger in his lair;
And though she found him feeble then,
There was no thought to spare,
Fast through his dying guilty heart,
That pity yet withheld,
She made her gleaming weapon dart,
And stained her soul with blood.

She bore the buffets and the jeers

Of an infuriate crowd;
She asked no grace, she showed no fear,
She owned her act aloud.
She only quailed when woman's cries
Bewailed the monster's fate,
Her lips betrayed her soul's surprise
That fiends gained aught but hate.

She justified her deed of blood

In stern, exalted phrase,
As in the judgment-hall she stood
With calm, intrepid gaze.
And when she heard her awful doom,
Before the morn to die,
Her cheek assumed a brighter bloom,
And triumph lit her eye.

She marked a painter's earnest gaze,

She raised to him her face,
That he for men in other days
Her raptured mien might trace.
Some bold heroic words she penned
To him her life who gave,
And as approached her fearful end,
Her soul grew yet more brave.

She wore the bonds, the robe of red,

As martyrs wear their crown;
She begged no mercy on her head,
She called no curses down;
It was enough that she fulfilled
The work that was decreed;
It was enough a voice was stilled
That doomed the just to bleed.

So beautiful, so filled with life,

So doomed, she passed along;
Above the sense, the sound of strife,
Alone in the vast throng.

Some with mute reverence lowly bowed,
 As thus the victim went ;
 And some outpouring hatred loud,
 The air with curses rent.

Without one tint of fresh youth paled,
 Without one quivering breath,
 Without one step that weakly failed,
 That maiden sped to death ;
 And with her lips yet glowing red,
 And bright her beaming eyes,
 To the sharp axe she bowed her head,
 And closed her sacrifice.

Yet two more female figures, embodying a stern lesson.

THE TWO MAUDES.

Broidered robe, bespangled vest,
 Raiment for a palace guest,
 Wears proud Maude to-night ;
 And her haughty smile is gay,
 As shines forth that rich array
 In the mirror bright.

Now, with triumph on her cheek,
 And with looks that conquest speak,
 See her pass along ;
 Listen to the murmured praise,
 Mark the fixed admiring gaze
 Of the courtly throng !

Now she joins the stately dance,
 And her tutored grace enchanting,
 Faultless is her mien ;
 And of all the lovely crowd
 She can hear it whispered loud
 She to-night is queen.

And of all the vestments there
 Hers is richest and most rare,
 Wondrous is its cost ;
 With apparel of less pride,
 Where so many shone beside
 She had triumph lost.

Therefore 'twas she gave command,
 When the courtly ball was planned,
 That her robe should be,
 Though the time for toil was brief,
 With the choicest flower and leaf
 Rich in broidery.

If for this be weary sighs,
 If for this be sleepless eyes,
 She no less will shine ;
 Unimpair'd her bloom shall be,
 And from care her bosom free,
 In her vesture fine.

* * * *

Broidered robe, bespangled vest,
 Raiment for a palace guest,
 Maude the poor hath wrought ;
 She who as a May-day queen
 Danced upon the village-green,
 Of gay Nature taught.

Then the sunshine, breeze and shower
 Played with her as with a flower ;
 Ruddy bloom had she ;
 As a balmy blushing morn,
 When the rose blows, and the thorn,
 She was sweet to see.

Now with pallor on her cheek,
 And with looks that sadness speak,
 See her languid rise ;
 Listen to the harsh command,
 See her faint and trembling stand,
 Whilst her task she plies.

Thronging to her spirit come
 Memories of village home,
 Bee and flower and bird,
 Ruddy beam of early day,
 White-fleeced lambs, in sportive play,
 Low of dappled herd ;

Breezy breath of heath-crossed hill,
 Silvery sound of trickling rill,
 Bank where violets grow ;
 And her heart is throbbing fast,
 With these pictures of the past,
 But no tears may flow.

Fevered is her low-bent brow,
 Wasted are her young limbs now,
 Joy hath lost its home ;
 Short the respite for relief,
 Stolen slumbers far too brief
 For soft dreams to come.

Tainted is the air she breathes,
 Perfumeless the gaud she wreathes,
 Garland false and cold.
 And the hearts around her seem
 As its flowers of mimic beam,
 They no balm unfold.

Now before her dazzled eyes
Lurid phantasms arise,
 Light is wasting fleet,
And the labourer more intent,
Lest the fitful ray be spent
 Ere her task's complete.

But the darkness gathers fast,
And she scarcely knows at last
 How her fingers ply ;
And she thinks it wondrous soon,
Since the hour of glaring noon
 That the night is nigh

Now her work is done.—Behold,
Ye who shine in silk and gold,
 What is its high cost !
She, who strove at your behest,
She, whose eyes are robbed of rest,
 Sight through toil hath lost.

Woe to you, vain child of clay !
Woe to you in robes so gay,
 Queens might envy them !
You with jewels overdone,
Her have robbed who had but one
 Of a priceless gem !

No words of mine could add to the force and eloquence of this pleading—I had almost said of this fulmination. What, I would add, should go rather in mitigation of the crime imputed to the courtly beauty. Selfish as vanity is—dangerous as leading to all the sins that follow upon frivolity, I have a true faith in the general kindliness and the general good-training of our young countrywomen, whether of the village green, or of the palace circle. I do not believe that any English lady would knowingly purchase a splendid dress at the cost of health to the artificer. Let them once think—let them once be brought to think—whether they can reasonably expect their orders to be executed within a given time, and what may be the amount of suffering caused by such execution, and, my life upon it, our Lady Maudes would give up their furbelows, and their embroideries, and trust to their native charms of grace and modesty to win as much admiration as they know what to do with. But then they must be taught to think ; and in matters of humanity, they could hardly find finer precepts than in the poems of Miss Day.

These lady poets are all my friends; I add yet another, personally a stranger, but still a friend, to the list—Mrs. Robert Dering.

CHURCH SERVICES.

The chimes from yonder steeple
Ring merrily and loud,
And groups of eager people
Towards their music crowd.

Before the altar's railing
A bride and bridegroom stand,
And lacy folds are veiling
The loveliest in the land.

And every ear is trying,
While all beside is still,
To hear the bride replying
Her soft but firm "I will."

The soft "I will" is spoken,
A glance as soft exchanged,—
That vow shall ne'er be brokeu
Nor those fond hearts estranged.

Another train advances,
No bridal train is this,
Yet there are joyous glances,
And whispered words of bliss.

With youthful pride and pleasure
Approach a happy pair,
Their first and darling treasure
Within the church they bear.

Their babe is now receiving
Upon its placid face,
The badge of the believing,
The holy sign of grace.

Sweet babe ! this world is hollow,
A world of woe and strife.
Take up thy cross and follow
Where leads the Lord of Life.

Another train is wending
Within the church its way,
Whilst prayers are still ascending
For blessings on that day.

But here no bride is blushing ;
And here no babe is blest ;
But mourners' tears are gushing
For one laid down to rest.

Bright dawns the bridal morning ;
The font to us is dear ;
But come, and hear the warning
That's spoken to us here !

A blight may soon be falling
On joys however pure,
But let us make our calling
And our election sure.

And then the day of sorrow
Which lays us in the earth,
Shall have a brighter morrow
Than that which saw our birth.

The sweetness and melody of these stanzas, as well as their pervading holiness, render them no unfitting conclusion to this little garland of verses, varying in manner, but of which we may truly say that they are in tone and feeling most English and most feminine.

XXIII.

CAVALIER POETS.

VISIT TO ROTHERFIELD GRAYS.

RICHARD LOVELACE, ROGER L'ESTRANGE, THE MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

IF there be one thing more than another in the nice balance of tastes and prejudices (for I do not speak here of principles) which inclines us now to the elegance of Charles, now to the strength of Cromwell—which disgusts us alternately with the license of the Cavaliers and the fanaticism of the Roundheads ; it would be the melancholy ruins of cast-down castles and plundered shrines, that meet our eyes all over our fair land, and nowhere in greater profusion than in this district, lying as it does in the very midst of some of the most celebrated battles of the Civil Wars. To say nothing of the siege of Reading, which more even than the vandalism of the Reformation completed the destruction of that noble abbey, the third in rank and size in England, with its magnificent church, its cloisters, and its halls, covering thirty acres of buildings—and such buildings ! within the outer courts ;—to say nothing of that most reckless barbarity just

at our door—we in our little village of Aberleigh lie between Basing-House to the south, whose desperately defended walls offer little more now than a mere site—and Donnington to the west, where the ruined gate-towers upon the hill alone remain of that strong fortress, which overlooked the well-contested field of Newbury—and Chalgrove to the north, where the reaper, as he binds his sheaf, still pauses to tell you the very place where Hampden fell. Every spot has its history! Look at a wooden spire, and your companion shakes his head, and says that it has been so ever since the Cavaliers were blown up in the church-tower! Ask the history of a crumbling wall, and the answer is pretty sure to be, Cromwell! That his Highness the Lord Protector did leave what an accomplished friend of mine calls “his peculiar impressions” upon a great many places in our neighbourhood is certain; on so many, that there is no actual or authentic catalogue of all; and in some cases there is nothing but general tradition, and the nature of the “impressions” in question, to vouch for the fact of their destruction at that period.

Amongst these, one of the edifices that must have been best worth preserving, and is even now most interesting to see, is the grand old castellated mansion, which in the reign of Elizabeth belonged to one of her favourite courtiers, and was known as Master Comptroller’s House, at Grays.

The very road to it is singularly interesting. Passing through the town, which increases in growth every day until one wonders when and where it will stop, and looking with ever-fresh admiration at the beautiful lace-work window of the old Friary, which I long to see preserved in the fittest manner, by forming again the chief ornament of a church, and then driving under the arch of the Great Western Railway, and feeling the strange vibration of some monster train passing over our heads—a proceeding which never fails to make my pony show off his choicest airs and graces, pricking up his pretty ears, tossing his slender head, dancing upon four feet, and sometimes rearing upon two—we arrive at the long, low, picturesque old bridge, the oldest of all the bridges that cross the Thames, so narrow that no two vehicles can pass at once, and that over every pier triangular spaces have been devised for the safety of foot-passengers. On the

centre arch is a fisherman's hut, occupying the place once filled by a friar's cell, and covering a still-existing chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, now put to secular uses—a dairy or a cellar.

A little way down the river is one of the beautiful islands of the Thames, now a smooth and verdant meadow, edged round with old willow pollards, calmly reflected in the bright, clear waters, but giving back in the twelfth century a far different scene. Here was fought a wager of battle between Robert de Montford, appellant, and Henry de Essex, hereditary Standard-bearer of the Kings of England, defendant, by command, and in the presence of Henry the Second. The story is told very minutely and graphically by Stowe. Robert de Montford at length struck down his adversary, "who fell," says the old historian, "after receiving many wounds; and the King, at the request of several noblemen, his relations, gave permission to the monks to inter the body, commanding that no further violence should be offered to it. The monks took up the vanquished knight, and carried him into the abbey, where he revived. When he recovered from his wounds, he was received into the community, and assumed the habit of the order, his lands being forfeited to the King." I have always thought that this story would afford excellent scope to some great novelist, who might give a fair and accurate picture of monastic life, and, indeed, of the monastic orders, as landlords, neighbours, teachers, priests, without any mixture of controversial theology, or inventing any predecessors of Luther or Wicliffe. How we should have liked to have heard all about "The Monastery," about the "Abbot," and Father Eustace, untroubled by Henry Warden or John Knox! From the moment that they appear, our comfort in the book vanishes, just as completely as that of the good easy Abbot Boniface himself. There we are in the middle of vexed questions, with the beautiful pile of Melrose threatening every moment to fall about our ears!

Our business now, however, is to get over the bridge, which after the excitement of one dispute with a pugnacious carrier, and another with a saucy groom, whose caracoling horse had wellnigh leaped over the parapets on either side; after some backing of other carriages, and some danger of being forced to back our own, we at last achieve, and enter, unscathed, the pleasant village of Caversham.

To the left, through a highly-ornamented lodge, lies the road to the ancient seat of the Blounts, a house made famous by Pope, where the fair ladies of his love, the sisters Martha and Teresa, lived and died. A fine old place it is ; and a picturesque road leads to it, winding through a tract called the Warren, between the high chalk cliffs, clothed with trees of all varieties, that for so many miles fence in the northern side of the Thames, and the lordly river itself, now concealed by tall elms, now open and shining in the full light of the summer sun. There is not such a flower-bank in Oxfordshire as Caversham Warren.

Our way, however, leads straight on. A few miles farther, and a turn to the right conducts us to one of the grand old village churches, which give so much of character to English landscape. A large and beautiful pile it is. The tower, half clothed with ivy, standing with its charming vicarage and its pretty vicarage-garden on a high eminence, overhanging one of the finest bends of the great river. A woody lane leads from the church to the bottom of the chalk-cliff, one side of which stands out from the road below, like a promontory, surmounted by the laurel hedges and flowery arbours of the vicarage-garden, and crested by a noble cedar of Lebanon. This is Shiplake church, famed far and near for its magnificent oak carving, and the rich painted glass of its windows, collected, long before such adornments were fashionable, by the fine taste of the late vicar, and therefore filled with the very choicest specimens of mediæval art, chiefly obtained from the remains of the celebrated Abbey of St. Bertin, near St. Omers, sacked during the first French Revolution. In this church Alfred Tennyson was married. Blessings be upon him ! I never saw the great poet in my life, but thousands who never may have seen him either, but who owe to his poetry the purest and richest intellectual enjoyment, will echo and re-echo the benison.

A little way farther, and a turn to the left leads to another spot consecrated by genius—Woodcot, where Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton passed the earlier years of his married life, and wrote several of his most powerful novels. I have always thought that the scenery of Paul Clifford caught some of its tone from that wild and beautiful country, for wild and beautiful it is. The terrace in the grounds commands a most

extensive prospect ; and beneath a clump of trees on the common behind the house, is the only spot where on a clear day Windsor may be seen on one side, and Oxford on the other—looking almost like the domes and towers and pinnacles that sometimes appear in the clouds—a fairy picture that the next breeze may waft away ! This beautiful residence stands so high, that one of its former possessors, Admiral Fraser (grandfather to that dear friend of mine who is the present owner), could discover Woodcot Clump from the mast of his own ship at Spithead, a distance of sixty miles.

Wyfold's Court, another pretty place a little farther on, which also belonged once to a most dear friend, possesses the finest wych-elms in England. Artists come from far and near to paint these stately trees, whose down-dropping branches and magnificent height are at once so graceful and so rich. They are said always to indicate ecclesiastical possession, but no trace of such dependency is to be found in the title-deeds, or in the tenure by which in feudal times the lands were held—that of presenting a rose to the King, should he pass by a certain road on a May day.

And now we approach Rotherfield Grays—its bowery lanes, its wild rugged commons, and its vast beech woods, from the edge of which projects, every here and there, a huge cherry-tree, looking, in the blossoming spring-time, as if carved in ivory, so exquisite is the whiteness, casting upon the ferny-turf underneath showers of snowy petals that blanch the very ground, and diffusing around an almond-like odour, that mingles with the springing thyme and the flowering gorse, and loads the very air with its balm.

Exquisite is the pleasantness of these beech woods, where the light is green from the silky verdure of the young leaves, and where the mossy woodpaths are embroidered with thousands of flowers, from the earliest violet and primrose, the wood-anemone, the wood-sorrel, the daffodil, and the wild hyacinth of spring, to the wood-vetch, the wood-roof, the campanulas, and the orchises of summer ;—for all the English orchises are here : that which so curiously imitates the dead oak leaf, that again which imitates the human figure ; the commonest but most pretty bee orchis, and the parallel ones which are called after the spider, the frog, and the fly. Strange freak of nature, thus, in a lower order of creation, to mimic

her own handiworks in a higher!—to mimic even our human mimicry!—for that which is called the man orchis is most like the imitation of a human figure that a child might cut from coloured paper. Strange, strange mimicry! but full of variety, full of beauty, full of odour. Of all the fragrant blossoms that haunt the woods, I know none so exquisite as that night-scented orchis which is called indifferently, the butterfly or the lily of the valley. Another glory of these woods, an autumnal glory, is the whole fungus tribe, various and innumerable as the mosses; from the sober drab-coloured fungi, spotted with white, which so much resemble a sea-egg, to those whose deep and gorgeous hues would shame the tinting of an Indian shell. Truffles, too, are found beneath the earth; and above it are deposited huge masses of the strange compound called in modern geological phrase Agglomerate. Flint and coral, and gravel, and attrited pebbles enter into the combination of this extraordinary natural conglomeration, which no steel, however hardened, can separate, and which seems to have been imitated very successfully by the old builders in their cements and the substances used in the filling up of their grandest structures, as may be seen in the layers which unite the enormous slabs of granite in the Roman walls at Silchester, as well as in the works of the old monkish architects at Reading Abbey. Another beauty of this country is to be found in the fields—now of the deep-red clover, with its shining crimson tops, now of the gay and brilliant saintfoin (the holy hay), the bright pink of whose flowery spikes gives to the ground the look of a bed of roses.

And now we reach the gate that admits us down a steep descent to the Rectory-house, a large substantial mansion, covered with Banksia roses, and finely placed upon a natural terrace—a fertile valley below, and its own woods and orchard-trees above.

My friend the rector, raciest of men, is an Oxford divine of the old school; a ripe scholar; one who has travelled wide and far, and is learned in the tongues, the manners, and the literature of many nations; but who is himself English to the backbone in person, thought, and feeling. Orthodox is he, no doubt. Nowhere are church and schools, and parish visitings, better cared for; but he has a knack of attending also to the creature comforts of all about him, of calling beef

and blankets in aid of his precepts, which have a wonderful effect in promoting their efficacy. Mansion and man are large alike, and alike overflowing with hospitality and kindness. His original and poignant conversation is so joyous and good-humoured, the making everybody happy is so evidently his predominant taste, that the pungency only adds to the flavour of his talk, and never casts a moment's shade over its sunny heartiness.*

Right opposite the Rectory terrace, framed like a picture by the rarest and stateliest trees, stands the object of my pilgrimage, Grays' Court, a comparatively modern house, erected amongst the remains of a vast old castellated mansion, belonging first to the noble family of Gray, who gave their name, not merely to the manor, but to the district ; then to the house of Knollys ; and latterly to the Stapletons, two venerable ladies of that name being its present possessors.

All my life I had heard of Grays' Court ; of the rich yet wild country in which it is placed ; of the park so finely undulated, and so profusely covered by magnificent timber ; of the huge old towers which seem to guard and sentinel the present house ; of the far-extended walls, whose foundations may yet be traced, in dry seasons, among the turf of the lawn ; of the traditions which assign the demolition of those ancient walls to the wars of the Commonwealth ; and of the strange absence of all documentary evidence upon the subject.

Another cause for my strong desire to see this interesting place is to be found in its association with one of those historical personages in whom I have always taken the warmest interest. Lord Essex (whose mother was the famous Lettice Knollys, who had had for her second husband another of Queen Elizabeth's favourites, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester), when confined in London, a prey to the tyranny of Elizabeth, petitioned, in one of those eloquent letters to the Virgin Queen which will always remain amongst the earliest and finest specimens of English prose, to be allowed to repair, for the benefit of his health, "to Master Comptroller's house at Grays." Ah ! we can fancy, when looking over this lovely valley, with its woods, its verdure, its sweep of hills, its feeling of the near river, we can well fancy how the poet-heart of the great Earl

* Since this passage was written my kind and valued friend is no more.

must have longed to leave the trial, the turmoil, the jangling, the treachery, the weary fears, the bitter humiliations of his London captivity, and to taste once more the sweet air, the pleasant sights, the calmness and the quiet of the country. Hope and comfort must have come with the thought. One of the prettiest pictures that I know is an extract from a contemporary letter, in the first volume of Mr. Craik's most interesting book, "The Romance of the Peerage," telling of the Earl and Countess, during one of the daily visits that she was at one time permitted to pay him when he was a prisoner in Essex House, walking together in the garden, "now he, now she, reading one to the other." The whole taste and feeling of the man, the daily habit of his life, is shown in this little circumstance. And this is the brave soldier who, when examined before the Privy Council, a council composed of open enemies and treacherous friends, had been kept nearly all day kneeling at the bottom of the table. Tyranny drove him into madness, and then exacted the full penalty of the wild acts which that madness prompted. But Essex was a man in advance of his age; the companion as well as the patron of poets; the protector of Papist and Puritan; the fearless asserter of liberty of conscience! He deserved a truer friend than Bacon, a more merciful judge than Elizabeth.

To the house of Knollys belongs another interesting association, that strangest of genealogical romances, the great case of the Banbury peerage. The cause was decided (if decided it can be called even now) by evidence found in the parish register of Rotherfield Grays.

The place has yet another attraction in its difficulty of access; the excellent ladies of the Court admitting few beyond their own immediate connections and nearest friends. One class, to be sure, finds its way there as if by instinct—the poor, who, as the birds of the air detect the grain under the surface in the newly-sown ground, are sure to find out the soil where charity lies germinating. Few excepting these constant visitors are admitted. But, besides the powerful introduction of our mutual friend the rector, a nephew of theirs, and his most sweet and interesting wife, had for some time inhabited the house which had been the home of my own youth, so that my name was not strange to them; and they had the kindness to allow me to walk over their beautiful

grounds and gardens, to see their charming Swiss dairy, with its marbles and its china, and, above all, to satisfy my curiosity by looking over the towers which still remain of the old castle—piles whose prodigious thickness of wall and distance from each other give token of the immense extent and importance of the place. It is said to have been built round two courts. Alnwick and Windsor rose to my thoughts as I contemplated these gigantic remains, and calculated the space that the original edifice must have covered. One of the old buildings is still occupied by the well of the castle, a well three hundred feet deep, which supplies the family with water. It will give some idea of the scale of the great mansion to say that the wheel by which the water is raised is twenty-five feet in diameter. Two donkeys are employed in the operation. One donkey suffices for the parallel but much smaller well at Carisbrook, where the animal is so accustomed to be put in for the mere purpose of exhibiting the way in which the water is raised to the visitors who go to look at the poor king's last prison, that he just makes the one turn necessary to show the working of the machine, and then stops of his own accord. The donkeys at Grays, kept for the use and not for show, have not had a similar opportunity of displaying their sagacity.

One cannot look at the place without a feeling of adaptedness. It is the very spot for a stronghold of the cavaliers ; a spot where Lovelace and Montrose might each have fought and each have sung, defending it to the last loaf of bread and the last charge of powder, and yielding only to the irresistible force of Cromwell's cannonade.

Much interest is imparted to the lays of these cavalier poets, when we consider the circumstances under which they were written. They were no carpet knights, pouring forth effusions of chivalrous loyalty in the security of a Court, or to amuse the leisure of a mild and temporary captivity ; but, for that very loyalty which they boasted so loudly, Montrose lay under sentence of death, and Richard Lovelace was pining in the crowded and loathsome prison called the Gatehouse, at Westminster. Perhaps the fate of the great Marquis was the happier of the two. He fell with the fame and consolations of a martyr, as his master had fallen before him ; whilst his brother poet was indeed released by the ascendant party

after the death of the King, when the royalists were so scattered and broken as to be no longer formidable ; but, when at last set free, he was penniless ; the lady of his love (Lucy Sacheverel), hearing that he had died of his wounds at Dunkirk, was married to another person ; and, oppressed with want and misery, he fell into a consumption. Wood relates that " he became very poor in body and purse, was the object of charity, went in ragged clothes, and mostly lodged in obscure and dirty places"—in one of which, situated in some alley near Shoe Lane, he died in 1658. What a reverse for one whose gallant bearing and splendid person seem to have corresponded so entirely with the noble and chivalrous spirit of his poetry ! Faults and virtues, Richard Lovelace, as a man and as a writer, may be taken as an impersonation of the cavalier of the civil wars, with much to charm the reader, and still more to captivate the fair.

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON.

When love, with unconfined wings,
 Hovers within my gates,
 And my divine Althea brings
 To whisper at my grates ;
 When I lie tangled in her hair,
 And fetter'd with her eye,
 The birds, that wanton in the air,
 Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
 With no allaying Thames,
 Our careless heads with roses crown'd
 Our hearts with loyal flames ;
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
 When healths and draughts go free,
 Fishes that tire in the deep,
 Know no such liberty.

When linnet-like confinèd, I
 With shriller note shall sing
 The mercy, sweetness, majesty,
 And glories of my King ;
 When I shall voice aloud how good
 He is, how great should be,
 The enlargèd winds that curl the flood
 Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage ;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage ;

If I have freedom in my love,
 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone that soar above
 Enjoy such liberty.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS.

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
 That from the nunnery
 Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
 To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I choose,
 The first foe in the field ;
 And with a stronger faith embrace
 A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
 As you, too, shall adore :
 I could not love thee, dear, so much,
 Loved I not honour more.

ON LELY'S PORTRAIT OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

See what an humble bravery doth shine,
 And grief triumphant breaking through each line,
 How it commands the face ! So sweet a scorn
 Never did happy misery adorn !
 So sacred a contempt that others show
 To this (o' the height of all the wheel) below ;
 That mightiest monarchs by this shaded book
 May copy out their proudest, richest look.

An elegant and accurate critic, Sir Egerton Brydges, has pointed out a singular coincidence between an illustration employed by Lovelace and a line for which Lord Byron has been, as it seems to me, unjustly censured in the "Bride of Abydos." The noble poet says of his heroine—

" The mind, the *music* breathing from her face ; "

and he vindicated the expression on the obvious ground of its clearness and truth. Lovelace, in a Song of Orpheus, lamenting the death of his wife, uses the same words in nearly the same sense. Lord Byron had probably never seen the poem, or, if he had, the illustration had perhaps remained in his mind, to be unconsciously reproduced by that strange process of amalgamation which so often combines memory with invention. These are the lines sung by Orpheus, who works out the idea too far :—

Oh, could you view the melody,
 Of every grace,
 And *music of her face*,
 You'd drop a tear,
 Seeing more harmony
 In her bright eye
 Than now you hear.

The poem of "Loyalty Confined" is supposed to have been written by Sir Roger L'Estrange, while imprisoned on account of his adherence to Charles the First. On a first reading, these terse and vigorous stanzas seem too much like a paraphrase of Lovelace's fine address "To Althea, from Prison;" but there is so much that is original, both in thought and expression, that we cannot but admit that the apparent imitation is the result of similarity of sentiment in a similar situation. These imprisoned cavaliers think and feel alike, and must needs speak the same language:—

Beat on, proud billows. Boreas, blow;
 Swell-curlèd waves, high as Jove's roof;
 Your incivility doth show
 That innocence is tempest-proof;
 Though truly heroes frown, my thoughts are calm;
 Then strike affliction, for my wounds are balm.
 That which the world miscalls a jail,
 A private closet is to me;
 Whilst a good conscience is my bail,
 And innocence my liberty;
 Locks, bars, and solitude together met
 Make me no prisoner, but an anchorite.
 I, whilst I wish'd to be retir'd,
 Into this private room was turn'd,
 As if their wisdoms had conspired
 The Salamander should be burn'd;
 Or like those sophists, that would drown a fish,
 Even constrain'd to suffer what I wish.
 The cynic loves his poverty,
 The pelican her wilderness,
 And 'tis the Indian's pride to be
 Naked on frozen Caucasus:
 Contentment cannot smart. Stoicks we see
 Make torments easy to their apathy.
 These manacles upon my arm
 I, as my mistress' favours, wear;
 And for to keep my ankles warm
 I have some iron shackles there;
 These walls are but my garrison; this cell,
 Which men call jail, doth prove my citadel.

I'm in the cabinet lock'd up
 Like some high-pric'd marguerite ;
 Or, like the Great Mogul or Pope,
 Am cloister'd up from public sight.
 Retiredness is a piece of majesty,
 And thus, proud Sultan, I'm as great as thee.

Here sin, for want of food, must starve
 Where tempting objects are not seen ;
 And these strong walls do only serve
 To keep vice out, and keep me in ;
 Malice of late's grown charitable, sure ;
 I'm not committed, but am kept secure.

So he that struck at Jason's life,
 Thinking to have made his purpose sure,
 By a malicious friendly knife
 Did only wound him to a cure.
 Malice, I see, wants wit ; for what is meant
 Mischief, ofttimes proves favour by the event.

When once my Prince affliction hath,
 Prosperity doth treason seem :
 And to make smooth so rough a path,
 Sweet patience I can learn from him.
 Now not to suffer shows no loyal heart ;
 When kings want ease, subjects must bear a part.

What though I cannot see my King,
 Neither in person nor in coin,
 Yet contemplation is a thing
 That renders what I have not mine.
 My King from me what adamant can part,
 Whom I do wear engraven on my heart ?

Have you not seen the nightingale
 A prisoner-like coop'd in a cage ;
 How she doth chaunt her morbid tale
 In that her narrow hermitage ?
 Even then her charming melody doth prove
 That all her bars are trees, her cage a grove.

I am that bird whom they contrive
 Thus to deprive of liberty ;
 But though they do my corpse confine,
 Yet, maugre hate, my soul is free.
 And though immured, yet can I chirp and sing,
 Disgrace to rebels, glory to my King !

My soul is free as ambient air,
 Although my baser part's immew'd ;
 Whilst loyal thoughts do still repair
 To accompany my solitude.
 Although rebellion do my body bind,
 My King alone can captivate my mind.

The following lines were written by the Marquis of Montrose, upon the execution of Charles the First. He shut himself up for three days ; and when Dr. Wishart, his chaplain, and the elegant historian of his wars, was admitted to him, he found these verses, which probably were intended as a sort of vow, on his table. We all know how that vow was redeemed.

Great, good, and just ! could I but rate
 My grief to thy too rigid fate,
 I'd weep the world to such a strain
 As it should deluge once again ;
 But since thy loud-tongued blood demands supplies
 More from Briareus' hands than Argus' eyes,
 I'll sing thy obsequies with trumpet sounds,
 And write thy epitaph with blood and wounds.

LOVE VERSES, BY THE MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

Sometimes the jargon of the different governments of the day, and sometimes the technical phrases of warfare, are made strange use of in these verses ; yet some of the lines are so noble, and many so original, that we forgive this soldierly mode of wooing in favour of its frankness. It is to be presumed the lady did the same.

My dear and only love, I pray
 This noble world of thee,
 Be governed by no other sway
 Than purest monarchy.
 For if confusion have a part,
 Which virtuous souls abhor,
 And hold a synod in thy heart,
 I'll never love thee more.

Like Alexander I will reign,
 And I will reign alone ;
 My thoughts shall evermore disdain
 A rival on my throne.
 He either fears his fate too much,
 Or his desert's too small,
 That puts it not unto the touch
 To win or lose it all.

But I must rule and govern still,
 And always give the law,
 And have each subject at my will,
 And all to stand in awe.
 But 'gainst my battery if I find
 Thou shun'st the prize to bore,
 Or that thou sett'st me up a blind,
 I'll never love thee more.

Or in the empire of thy heart,
 Where I would solely be,
 Another do pretend a part,
 And dares to vie with me ;
 Or if committees thou erect,
 And goest on such a score,
 I'll sing and laugh at thy neglect,
 And never love thee more.

But if thou wilt be constant then,
 And faithful of thy word,
 I'll make thee glorious by my pen,
 And famous by my sword.
 I'll serve thee in such noble ways
 Was never heard before,
 I'll crown and deck thee all with bays,
 And love thee evermore.

Could it be in woman to resist such promises from such a man ?

PART SECOND.

My dear and only love, take heed
 Lest thou thyself expose,
 And let all longing lovers feed
 Upon such looks as those ;
 A marble wall, then, build about,
 Beset, without a door,
 But, if thou let thy heart fly out,
 I'll never love thee more.

Let not their oaths, like volleys shot,
 Make any breach at all,
 Nor smoothness of their language plot
 Which way to scale the wall ;
 Nor balls of wildfire love consume
 The shrine which I adore,
 For if such smoke about thee fume,
 I'll never love thee more.

I think thy virtues be too strong
 To suffer by surprise,
 Which victuall'd by my love so long,
 The siege at length must rise,
 And leave thee ruled in that health
 And state thou wast before ;
 But if thou turn a Commonwealth,
 I'll never love thee more.

But if by fraud or by consent
 Thy heart to ruin come,
 I'll sound no trumpet as I wont,
 Nor march by beat of drum ;

But hold my arms like ensigns up,
 Thy falsehood to deplore,
 And bitterly will sigh and weep,
 And never love thee more.

I'll do with thee as Nero did
 When Rome was set on fire,
 Not only all relief forbid,
 But to a hill retire ;
 And scorn to shed a tear to see
 Thy spirit grown so poor,
 And smiling sing, until I die,—
 I'll never love thee more.

Yet for the love I bare thee once,
 Lest that thy name should die,
 A monument of marble stone
 The truth shall testify,
 That every pilgrim passing by
 May pity and deplore
 My case, and read the reason why
 I can love thee no more.

The golden laws of love shall be
 Upon this pillar hung,
 A simple heart, a single eye,
 A true and constant tongue.
 Let no man for more love pretend
 Than he has hearts in store ;
 True love begun shall never end,
 Love one, and love no more.

* * * *

My heart shall with the sun be fix'd
 In constancy most strange ;
 And thine shall with the moon be mix'd,
 Delighting still in change.
 Thy beauty shined at first most bright,
 And woe is me therefore !
 That ever I found thy love so light,
 I could love thee no more.

Verses written by the Marquis of Montrose with the point of a diamond upon the glass window of his prison, after receiving his sentence :—

Let them bestow on every airth a limb ;
 Then open all my veins, that I may swim
 To Thee, my Maker, in that crimson lake ;
 Then place my parboil'd head upon a stake ;
 Scatter my ashes ; strew them in the air :—
 Lord ! since Thou know'st where all those atoms are,
 I'm hopeful Thou'l recover once my dust,
 And confident Thou 'lt raise me with the Just.

They who would follow the great Marquis to the last should read the fine ballad called "The Execution of Montrose," in Professor Aytoun's charming volume, "The Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers."

XXIV.

POETRY THAT POETS LOVE.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR—LEIGH HUNT—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY—
JOHN KEATS.

To no one can the words that I have placed at the head of this paper apply more perfectly than to Mr. Landor. No poetry was ever dearer to poets than his. Nearly fifty years ago, we find Southey writing of and to the author of "Gebir," with a respectful admiration seldom felt by one young man for another; and, from that hour to the present, all whom he would himself most wish to please have showered upon him praises that cannot die. The difficulty in selecting from his works is the abundance; but I prefer the *Hellenics*, that charming volume, because few, very few, have given such present life to classical subjects. I begin with the Preface, so full of grace and modesty.

"It is hardly to be expected that ladies and gentlemen will leave, on a sudden, their daily promenade, skirted by Turks, and shepherds, and knights, and plumes, and palfreys, of the finest Tunbridge manufacture, to look at these rude frescoes, delineated on an old wall, high up, and sadly weak in colouring. As in duty bound, we can wait. The reader (if there should be one) will remember that Sculpture and Painting have never ceased to be occupied with the scenes and figures which we venture once more to introduce in poetry; it being our belief that what is becoming in two of the fine arts, is not quite unbecoming in a third, the one which, indeed, gave birth to them."

And now comes the very first story; with its conclusion that goes straight to the heart.

THRASYMEDES AND EUNÖE.

Who will away to Athens with me? Who
Loves choral songs and maidens crowned with flowers
Unenvious? Mount the pinnace; hoist the sail.

I promise ye, as many as are here,
 Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me, taste
 From unrinsed barrel the diluted wine
 Of a low vineyard, or a plant ill-pruned.
 But such as anciently the *Æ*gean isles
 Poured in libation at their solemn feasts ;
 And the same goblets shall ye grasp, embost
 With no vile figures of loose languid boors,
 But such as gods have lived with and have led.

The sea smiles bright before us. What white sail
 Plays yonder ? What pursues it ? Like two hawks
 Away they fly. Let us away in time
 To overtake them. Are they menaces
 We hear ? And shall the strong repulse the weak,
 Enraged at her defender ? Hippias !
 Art thou the man ? 'T was Hippias. He had found
 His sister borne from the Cecropion port
 By Thrasymedes. And reluctantly ?
 Ask, ask the maiden ; I have no reply.

“ Brother ! O brother Hippias ! Oh, if love,
 If pity ever touched thy breast, forbear !
 Strike not the brave, the gentle, the beloved,
 My Thrasymedes, with his cloak alone
 Protecting his own head and mine from harm.”
 “ Didst thou not once before,” cried Hippias,
 Regardless of his sister, hoarse with wrath
 At Thrasymedes, “ didst thou not, dog-eyed,
 Dare, as she walked up to the Parthenon
 On the most holy of all holy days,
 In sight of all the city, dare to kiss
 Her maiden cheek ? ”

“ Ay, before all the gods,
 Ay, before Pallas, before Artemis,
 Ay, before Aphrodite, before Herè,
 I dared ; and dare again. Arise, my spouse !
 Arise ! and let my lips quaff purity
 From thy fair open brow.”

The sword was up,
 And yet he kissed her twice. Some god withheld
 The arm of Hippias ; his proud blood seethed slower
 And smote his breast less angrily ; he laid
 His hand on the white shoulder and spoke thus :
 “ Ye must return with me. A second time
 Offended, will our sire Peisistratos
 Pardon the affront ? Thou shouldst have asked thyself
 That question ere the sail first flapt the mast.”
 “ Already thou hast taken life from me ;
 Put up thy sword,” said the sad youth, his eyes
 Sparkling ; but whether love or rage or grief
 They sparkled with, the gods alone could see.
 Peirœus they re-entered, and their ship

Drove up the little waves against the quay,
 Whence was thrown out a rope from one above,
 And Hippias caught it. From the virgin's waist
 Her lover dropped his arm, and blushed to think
 He had retained it there, in sight of rude
 Irreverent men; he led her forth nor spake.
 Hippias walked silent too, until they reached
 The mansion of Peisistratos, her sire.
 Serenely in his sternness did the prince
 Look on them both awhile: they saw not him,
 For both had cast their eyes upon the ground.
 "Are these the pirates thou hast taken, son?"
 Said he. "Worse, father! worse than pirates they
 Who thus abuse thy patience, thus abuse
 Thy pardon, thus abuse the holy rites
 Twice over."

"Well hast thou performed thy duty,"
 Firmly and gravely said Peisistratos.
 "Nothing, then, rash young man! could turn thy heart
 From Eunoe my daughter?"

"Nothing, Sir,
 Shall ever turn it. I can die but once
 And love but once. O Eunoe! farewell;"
 "Nay, she shall see what thou canst bear for her."
 "O father! Shut me in my chamber, shut me
 In my poor mother's tomb, dead or alive,
 But never let me see what he can bear;
 I know how much that is when borne for me."
 "Not yet: come on. And lag not thou behind,
 Pirate of virgin and of princely hearts!
 Before the people, and before the goddess,
 Thou hadst evinced the madness of thy passion,
 And now wouldst bear from home and plenteousness
 To poverty and exile, this my child."
 Then shuddered Thrasymedes, and exclaimed,
 "I see my crime; I saw it not before.
 The daughter of Peisistratos was born
 Neither for exile nor for poverty,
 Ah! nor for me!" He would have wept, but one
 Might see him, and weep worse. The prince unmoved
 Strode on, and said, "To-morrow shall the people,
 All who beheld thy trespasses, behold
 The justice of Peisistratos, the love
 He bears his daughter, and the reverence
 In which he holds the highest law of God."
 He spake; and on the morrow they were one.

Did not Mr. Landor write this scene of Orestes, one fine June morning, seated on a garden-roller in the court before Mr. Kenyon's house in London?—fitting home for such an inspiration! And is not that the way that such scenes are

written?—not sitting down with malice prepense to compose poetry, but letting it come when it will and how it will, and striking it off at a heat.

THE DEATH OF CLYTEMNESTRA.

ORESTES AND ELECTRA.

Electra. Pass on, my brother! she awaits the wretch,
Dishonourer, despoiler, murderer—
None other name shall name him—she awaits
As would a lover—

Heavenly gods! what poison
O'erflows my lips!
Adulteress! husband-slayer!
Strike her, the tigress!

Think upon our father—
Give the sword scope—think what a man was he,
How fond of her! how kind to all about,
That he might gladden and teach us—how proud
Of thee, Orestes! tossing thee above
His joyous head, and calling thee his crown.
Ah! boys remember not what melts our hearts
And marks them evermore!

Bite not thy lip,
Nor tramp as an unsteady colt the ground,
Nor stare against the wall, but think again
How better than all fathers was our father.
Go.

Orestes. Loose me, then! for this white hand, Electra,
Hath fastened upon mine with fiercer grasp
Than I can grasp the sword.

Electra. Go, sweet Orestes,
I knew not I was holding thee—Avenger him!
(*Alone.*) How he sprang from me!

Sure he now hath reached
The room before the bath!

The bath-door creaks!
It hath creaked thus since he—since thou, O father!
Ever since thou didst loosen its strong valves,
Hither with all thy dying weight, or strength
Agonized with her stabs—

What plunge was that?

Ah! me!

What groans are those?

Orestes (returning). They sound through hell,
Rejoicing the Eumenides.

She slew

Our father: she made thee the scorn of slaves;
Me (son of him who ruled this land and more)
She made an outcast—

Would I had been so

For ever! ere such vengeance—

What a picture is that of Agamemnon and his boy—

“ Tossing thee above
His joyous head, and calling thee his crown !”

Long may Mr. Landor conceive such pictures, and write such scenes!

The days are happily past when the paltry epithet of "Cockney Poets" could be bestowed upon Keats and Leigh Hunt: the world has outlived them. People would as soon think of applying such a word to Dr. Johnson. Happily, too, one of the delightful writers who were the objects of these unworthy attacks has outlived them also—has lived to attain a popularity of the most genial kind, and to diffuse, through a thousand pleasant channels, many of the finest parts of our finest writers. He has done good service to literature in another way, by enriching our language with some of the very best translations since Cowley. Who ever thought to see Tasso's famous passage in the "Amyntas" so rendered?

ODE TO THE GOLDEN AGE

O lovely age of gold !
Not that the rivers rolled
With milk, or that the woods wept honey-dew ;
Not that the reedy ground
Produced without a wound,
Or the mild serpent had no tooth that slew ;
Not that a cloudless blue
For ever was in sight ;
Or that the heaven which burns.

And now is cold by turns,
 Looked out in glad and everlasting light ;
 No, nor that even the insolent ships from far
 Brought war to no new lands, nor riches worse than war.

Who, again, ever hoped to see such an English version of
 one of Petrarch's most characteristic poems, conceits and all ?

PETRARCH'S CONTEMPLATIONS OF DEATH IN THE BOWER OF LAURA.

Clear, fresh, and dulcet streams,
 Which the fair shape who seems
 To me sole woman, haunted at noon tide ;
 Fair bough, so gently lit,
 (I sigh to think of it)
 Which lent a pillar to her lovely side ;
 And turf and flowers bright-eyed,
 O'er which her folded gown
 Flowed like an angel's down ;
 And you, O holy air and hushed,
 Where first my heart at her sweet glances gushed,
 Give ear, give ear, with one consenting,
 To my last words, my last, and my lamenting.

If 't is my fate below,
 And heaven will have it so,
 That love must close these dying eyes in tears,
 May my poor dust be laid
 In middle of your shade,
 While my soul, naked, mounts to its own spheres.
 The thought would calm my fears
 When taking, out of breath,
 The doubtful step of death ;
 For never could my spirit find
 A stiller port after the stormy wind ;
 Nor in more calm abstracted bourne
 Slip from my travelled flesh, and from my bones outworn.

Perhaps, some future hour,
 To her accustomed bower
 Might come the untamed, and yet gentle she ;
 And where she saw me first,
 Might turn with eyes athirst
 And kinder joy to look again for me ;
 Then, oh the charity !
 Seeing amidst the stones
 The earth that held my bones,
 A sigh for very love at last
 Might ask of heaven to pardon me the past ;
 And heaven itself could not say nay,
 As with her gentle veil she wiped the tears away.

How well I call to mind,
 When from those boughs the wind

Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower ;
 And there she sat meek-eyed,
 In midst of all that pride,
 Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower.
 Some to her hair paid dower,
 And seemed to dress the curls
 Queenlike with gold and pearls ;
 Some snowing on her drapery stopped,
 Some on the earth, some on the water dropped ;
 While others, fluttering from above,
 Seemed wheeling round in pomp and saying, "Here reigns love."

How often then I said,
 Inward, and filled with dread,
 "Doubtless this creature came from paradise !"
 For at her look the while,
 Her voice, and her sweet smile
 And heavenly air, truth parted from mine eyes ;
 So that, with long-drawn sighs,
 I said, as far from men,
 "How came I here, and when ?"
 I had forgotten ; and, alas !
 Fancied myself in heaven, not where I was ;
 And from that time till this, I bear
 Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere.

In justice to Mr. Leigh Hunt, I add to these fine translations, of which every lover of Italian literature will perceive the merit, some extracts from his original poems. Except Chaucer himself, no painter of processions has excelled the entrance of Paulo to Ravenna, in the story of Rimini.

'T is morn, and never did a lovelier day
 Salute Ravenna from its leafy bay ;
 For a warm eve, and gentle rains at night,
 Have left a sparkling welcome for the light ;
 And April, with his white hands wet with flowers,
 Dazzles the bridemaids looking from the towers :
 Green vineyards and fair orchards, far and near,
 Glitter with drops ; and heaven is sapphire clear,
 And the lark rings it, and the pine-trees glow,
 And odours from the citrons come and go ;
 And all the landscape—earth and sky and sea—
 Breathes like a bright-eyed face that laughs out openly.

'T is nature, full of spirits, waked and loved.
 E'en sloth to-day goes quick and unreproved ;
 For where's the living soul, priest, minstrel, clown,
 Merchant or lord, that speeds not to the town ?
 Hence happy faces, striking through the green
 Of leafy roads, at every turn are seen ;

And the far ships, lifting their sails of white
Like joyful hands, come up with scattered light
Come gleaming up—true to the wished-for day—
And chase the whistling brine, and swirl into the bay.

And well may all the world come crowding there,
If peace returning and processions rare,
And to crown all, a marriage in the spring,
Can set man's heart and fancies on the wing :
For on this beauteous day Ravenna's pride,
The daughter of their prince, becomes a bride ;
A bride to ransom an exhausted land ;
And he whose victories have obtained her hand
Has taken with the dawn, so flies report,
His promised journey to the expecting court,
With knightly pomp, and squires of high degree
The bold Giovanni, Lord of Rimini.

The road that way is lined with anxious eyes,
And false announcements and fresh laughters rise ;
The horseman hastens through the jeering crowd,
And finds no horse within the gates allowed :
And who shall tell the drive there and the din ?
The bells, the drums, the crowds yet squeezing in,
The shouts from mere exuberance of delight,
And mothers with their babes in sore affright,
And armed bands making important way,
Gallant and grave, the lords of holiday ;
Minstrels and friars and beggars many a one
That pray and roll their blind eyes in the sun,
And all the buzzing throngs that hang like bees
On roofs and walls and tops of garden trees ?

With tapestries bright the windows overflow
By lovely faces brought that come and go,
Till by their work the charmers take their seats,
Themselves the sweetest pictures in the streets,
In colours by light awnings beautified ;
Some re-adjusting tresses newly tied,
Some turning a trim waist, or o'er the flow
Of crimson cloths hanging a hand of snow :
Smiling and talking some, and some serene,
But all with flowers, and all with garlands green,
And most in fluttering talk impatient for the scene.

At length the approaching trumpets, with a start
On the smooth wind come dancing to the heart.
The crowd are mute ; and from the southern wall
A lordly blast gives answer to the call.
Then comes the crush ; and all who best can strive
In shuffling struggle toward the palace drive,
Where balustered and broad, of marble fair,
Its portico commands the public square :
For there Count Guido is to hold his state
With his fair daughter, seated o'er the gate.

But far too well the square has been supplied :
 And, after a rude heave from side to side,
 With angry faces turned and nothing gained.
 The order first found easiest is maintained
 Leaving the pathways only for the crowd,
 The space within for the procession proud.
 For in this manner is the square set out :—
 The sides half-deep are crowded round about
 And faced with guards who keep the horseway clear ;
 And round a fountain in the midst appear—
 Seated with knights and ladies in discourse—
 Rare Tuscan wits and warbling troubadours,
 Whom Guido, for he loved the Muse's race,
 Has sat there to adorn his public place.
 The seats with boughs are shaded from above
 Of bays and roses—trees of wit and love.
 And in the midst fresh whistling through the scene
 The lightsome fountain starts from out the green
 Clear and compact ; till at its height o'errun
 It shakes its loosening silver in the sun.

* * * *

Another start of trumpets with reply ;
 And o'er the gate a crimson canopy
 Opens to right and left its flowing shade,
 And Guido issues with the princely maid
 And sits. The courtiers fall on either side
 But every look is fixed upon the bride,
 Who seems all thought at first, and hardly hears
 The enormous shout that springs as she appears ;
 Till, as she views the countless gaze below,
 And faces that with grateful homage glow
 A home to leave and husband yet to see
 Are mixed with thoughts of lofty charity :
 And hard it is she thinks to have no will ;
 But not to bless these thousands harder still.
 With that a keen and quivering sense of tears
 Scarce moves her sweet proud lip and disappears ;
 A smile is underneath and breaks away
 And round she looks and breathes as best befits the day.

What need I tell of cheeks and lips and eyes
 The locks that fall, and bosom's balmy rise ?
 Beauty's whole soul is here, though shadowed still
 With anxious thought and doubtful maiden will ;
 A lip for endless love should all prove just ;
 An eye that can withdraw into as deep distrust.

While thus with earnest looks the people gaze,
 Another shout the neighbouring quarters raise ;
 The train are in the town, and gathering near
 With noise of cavalry and trumpets clear,
 A princely music, unbedimmed with drums.
 The mighty brass seems opening as it comes.

And now it fills and now it shakes the air,
 And now it bursts into the sounding square,
 At which the crowd with such a shout rejoice,
 Each think he's deafened with his neighbour's voice.
 Then with a long-drawn breath the clangours die,
 The palace trumpets give a last reply ;
 And clustering hoofs succeed with stately stir
 Of snortings proud and clinking furniture ;—
 The most majestic sound of human will :
 Nought else is heard some time, the people are so still.

I would fain go on with this procession, which the art of the poet continues to make us see and hear, and almost feel, so vividly does he describe the pageantry, the noise, and the jostling. But it fills the whole canto, and there is yet another poem for which I must make room. Every mother knows these pathetic stanzas. I shall never forget attempting to read them to my faithful maid, the hemmer of flounces, whose fair-haired Saxon boy, her pet and mine, was then fast recovering from a dangerous illness. I attempted to read these verses, and did read as many as I could for the rising in the throat,—the *hysterica passio* of poor Lear,—and as many as my auditor could hear for her own sobs. No doubt they have often extorted such praises—the truest and the most precious that can be given.

TO T. L. H., SIX YEARS OLD, DURING A SICKNESS.

Sleep breathes at last from out thee,
 My little patient boy ;
 And balmy rest about thee—
 Smooths off the day's annoy.
 I sit me down and think
 Of all thy winning ways ;
 Yet almost wish with sudden shrink
 That I had less to praise.
 Thy sidelong pillow'd meekness,
 Thy thanks to all that aid,
 Thy heart in pain and weakness
 Of fancied faults afraid ;
 The little trembling hand
 That wipes thy quiet tears,
 These, these are things that may demand
 Dread memories for years.
 Sorrows I've had, severe ones,
 I will not think of now ;
 And calmly midst my dear ones
 Have wasted with dry brow ;

But when thy fingers press
 And pat my stooping head,
 I cannot bear the gentleness,—
 The tears are in their bed.

Ah, first-born of thy mother
 When life and hope were new,
 Kind playmate of thy brother,
 Thy sister, father, too ;
 My light where'er I go,
 My bird when prison-bound,
 My hand-in-hand companion,—no,
 My prayers shall hold thee round.

To say He has departed,
 His voice, his face is gone !
 To feel impatient-hearted
 Yet feel we must bear on !
 Ah, I could not endure
 To whisper of such woe,
 Unless I felt this sleep ensure
 That it will not be so.

Yes ! still he's fixed and sleeping !
 This silence, too, the while—
 Its very hush and creeping
 Seem whispering us a smile.
 Something divine and dim
 Seems going by mine ear
 Like parting wings of Seraphim
 Who say, "We've finished here."

The name of Percy Bysshe Shelley is united to that of Leigh Hunt by many associations. They were in Italy together ; they were friends, and the survivor has never ceased to bewail the untimely catastrophe of that great poet. In how many senses does that early and sudden death appear untimely to our dim eyes ! Doubtless, all was wise, all just, all merciful ; yet to our finite perceptions he seemed snatched away, just as his spirit was preparing to receive the truths to which it had before been blinded. However, this rests with an All-wise and an All-merciful Judge, and is far beyond our imperfect speculations.

In a literary point of view, there is no doubt but every succeeding poem showed the gradual clearing away of the mists and vapours with which, in spite of his exquisite rhythm, and a thousand beauties of detail, his fine genius was originally clouded.

The first time I ever met with any of his works, this vague-

ness brought me into a ludicrous dilemma. It was in the great library of Tavistock House, that Mr. Perry one morning put into my hand a splendidly printed and splendidly bound volume ("Alastor," I think), and desired me to read it, and give him my opinion. "You will at least know," said he, "whether it be worth anybody else's reading."

Accordingly, I took up the magnificent presentation copy, and read conscientiously until visitors came in. I had no marker, and the richly-bound volume closed as if instinctively; so that when I resumed my task, on the departure of the company, not being able to find my place, I was obliged to begin the book at the first line. More visitors came, and went, and still the same calamity befell me; again, and again, and again, I had to search in vain amongst a succession of melodious lines, as like each other as the waves of the sea, for buoy or landmark, and had always to put back to shore, and begin my voyage anew. I do not remember having been ever in my life more ashamed of my own stupidity than when obliged to say to Mr. Perry, in answer to his questions as to the result of my morning's studies, that, doubtless, it was a very fine poem—only that I never could tell, when I took up the book, where I had left off half an hour before—an unintended criticism, which, as characteristic both of author and reader, very much amused my kind and clever host.

Now, could such a calamity befall even the stupidist of young girls, in reading that perfection of clearness and dramatic construction, "The Cenci?" Ah! what a tragic poet was lost in that boat-wreck? Could it have happened with the "Ode to the Skylark," an ode as melodious, as various, and as brilliant as the song of the bird it celebrates. Both seem soaring upward to Heaven, and pouring forth an unconscious hymn of praise and thanksgiving.

TO THE SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blythe spirit !

Bird thou never wert,

That from heaven, or near it,

Pourest thy full heart

In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
 From the earth thou springest ;
 Like a cloud of fire,
 The blue deep thou wingest,
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
 Of the sunken sun,
 O'er which clouds are brightening,
 Thou dost float and run,
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
 Melts around thy flight ;
 Like a star of heaven,
 In the broad daylight
 Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows
 Of that silver sphere,
 Whose intense lamp narrows
 In the white dawn clear,
 Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
 With thy voice is loud,
 As, when night is bare,
 From one lonely cloud
 The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not ;
 What is most like thee ?
 From rainbow clouds there flow not
 Drops so bright to see,
 As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
 In the light of thought,
 Singing hymns unbidden
 Till the world is wrought
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not :

Like a high-born maiden
 In a palace tower,
 Soothing her love-laden
 Soul in secret hour
 With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower :

Like a glow-worm golden
 In a dell of dew,
 Scattering un beholding
 Its aerial hue
 Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view :

Like a rose embowered
 In its own green leaves,
 By warm winds deflowered,
 Till the scent it gives
 Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
 On the twinkling grass,
 Rain-awakened flowers,
 All that ever was
 Joyous, and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
 What sweet thoughts are thine :
 I have never heard
 Praise of love or wine
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
 Or triumphal chaunt,
 Matched with thine would be all
 But an empty vaunt—
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
 Of thy happy strain ?
 What fields or waves or mountains ?
 What shapes of sky or plain ?
 What love of thine own kind ? what ignorance of pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance
 Languor cannot be :
 Shadow of annoyance
 Never come near thee :
 Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
 Thou of death must deem
 Things more true and deep
 Than we mortals dream,
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream ?

We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not :
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught ;
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
 Hate, and pride, and fear ;
 If we were things born
 Not to shed a tear,
 I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
 Of delightful sound,
 Better than all treasures
 That in books are found,
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground !
 Teach me half the gladness
 That thy brain must know,
 Such harmonious madness
 From my lips would flow,
 The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

If there be anywhere a companion poem to this, it is John Keats's "Ode to the Nightingale." Poor John Keats ! he too was called in scorn a "Cockney Poet;" he too was a friend of Leigh Hunt's; he too died far from his native country, not indeed like Shelley, by sad mischance, off the coast of Italy, but by slow disease in the very heart of the Eternal City ;—died after having done enough to show the world all that it lost in him. No one since Spenser has possessed a more graphic pen. His processions not only live, they move.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thy happiness,—
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.
 Oh for a draught of vintage, that hath been
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !
 Oh for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushing Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
 And purple-stainèd mouth ;
 That I might drink and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim :
 Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;

Where palsy shakes a few sad, last grey hairs,
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs ;
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull train perplexes and retards :
 Already with thee ! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Clustered around by all her starry Fays ;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild :
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
 Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves ;
 And mid-May's eldest child
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of bees on summer eves.

Darkling I listen ; and for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Called him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy !
 Still wouldest thou sing, and I have ears in vain,—
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self !
 Adieu ! the Fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades :
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?
 Fled is that music :—do I wake or sleep ?

A most interesting Life of Keates, by Mr. Monckton Milnes, has been recently published. Few works are better worth reading, not only for the sake of the young poet, but for that of his generous benefactors, Sir James Clarke and Mr. Severn. It is well in an age, called perhaps more selfish than it deserves to be, to fall back upon such instances of patient and unostentatious kindness.

XXV.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

VISIT TO BATH.

CHRISTOPHER ANSTEY.

BATH is a very elegant and classical looking city. Standing upon a steep hill-side, its regular white buildings rising terrace above terrace, crescent above crescent, glittering in the sun, and charmingly varied by the green trees of its park and gardens ; its pretty suburban villas mingling with the beautiful villages that surround it on every side ; nothing can exceed the grace and amenity of the picture. Even the railway contributes, by a rare exception, to the effect of the landscape. Very pleasant is Bath to look at. But when contrasted with its old reputation as the favourite resort of the noble and the fair, the Baden-Baden of its day, to which the well came for amusement, and the sick as much for cheerfulness as for cure, it is impossible not to feel that the spirit has departed ; that it is a city of memories—the very Pompeii of watering-places.

It was a far smaller town in that joyous time, and perhaps the stately streets that rise from the old springs in every direction may have made it too spacious and too commodious ; for Fashion is a capricious deity, who loves of all things to be crowded, provided the crowd be fashionable, and does not dislike so much gentle inconvenience as may serve to enhance the comfort and magnificence of her real home.

Whatever be the cause, Bath, like the Italian cities, which it is often said to resemble, is picturesque, silent, and empty. Lodging in Milsom Street, the main artery of the town, where the best shops are congregated, and at an excellent library, always the most frequented among shops, my little maid, a shrewd observer of such matters, declared she knew every carriage that passed, and could count them on her fingers ; and I myself, less keen sighted, did not care to ask her whether she meant the fingers on one hand or on two.

I speak this out of pure regard to truth, since, for my own part, I owe Bath all gratitude. Going thither with health and spirits so shattered by a long illness and great sorrow, that I could not muster courage to encounter the imaginary dangers of the Box Tunnel, I returned, in the course of a few weeks, so completely restored in mind and body, that when in the very midst of that same tunnel, the ghost of my departed fear met me in the shape of a story (a story with variations) of the foolish lady who had been so exquisitely silly as to hire a fly to escape from the peril, my fellow-travellers really refused to believe that the person who laughed so heartily at her past folly could possibly have been the real heroine of the legend. So that I suspect I left two traditions behind me in the Box Tunnel—first as a simpleton, then as an impostor.

A place of interesting associations is Bath. The dear friend whom I principally went to see—one of a privileged few, who carry the lively spirit, the ready indulgence, the quick intelligence of youth, into wise and honoured age—might herself almost pass for one of its recollections. She took me to see the house where, fifty years before, Madame de Genlis had lived, when sent to England, at the very beginning of the Revolution, with Mademoiselle d'Orleans ; and described the looks and manners of the quiet, steady pupil, and the flighty governess, as if it had been yesterday. She walked with me through the street where Mrs. Thrale had shone forth in both her phases—the hostess and friend of Dr. Johnson, and Piozzi's slandered, defiant, but not unhappy wife. Miss Burney never depicted her better. And Miss Burney herself she showed forth nearly as well as that clever, conceited, prim, affected, die-away little authoress, who never for one moment (unlucky body !) could forget that she was an authoress—ay, and the authoress of “Cecilia” too has shown herself to all posterity

in that looking-glass, her "Diary." Then she went through all the past dynasties of the drama—Kembles, Linleys, Ellistons ; and last of all she took me to Bathford, to gaze upon Gainsborough's admirable portrait of Quin, which looks just as if he was preparing to sit down to a John Dory.

A place full of associations is Bath. When we had fairly done with the real people, there were great fictions to fall back upon ; and I am not sure, true and living human beings as Horace Walpole and Madame d'Arblay have shown themselves in their letters and journals—full of that great characteristic of our human nature, inconsistency, of strength and weakness, of wisdom and folly, of virtues and faults ; I am not sure, eminently human as these worthies shine forth in their writings, that those who never lived except in the writings of other people—the heroes and heroines of Miss Austen, for example—are not the more real of the two. Her exquisite story of "Persuasion" absolutely haunted me. Whenever it rained (and it did rain every day that I staid at Bath, except one), I thought of Anne Elliot meeting Captain Wentworth, when driven by a shower to take refuge in a shoe-shop. Whenever I got out of breath in climbing up-hill, (which, considering that one dear friend lived in Lansdown Crescent, and another on Beechen Cliff, happened also pretty often), I thought of that same charming Anne Elliot, and of that ascent from the lower town to the upper, during which all her tribulations ceased. And when at last, by dint of trotting up one street and down another, I incurred the unromantic calamity of a blister on the heel, even that grievance became classical by the recollection of the similar catastrophe, which, in consequence of her peregrinations with the Admiral, had befallen dear Mrs. Croft. I doubt if any one, even Scott himself, have left such perfect impressions of character and place as Jane Austen.

Besides those pleasures of memory, Bath, eight years ago, was not wanting in living illustrations. Poor Miss Pickering, so fertile as a novelist, so excellent as a woman ; my friend, Miss Waddington, an elegant authoress, who charmed the languors of illness by the creations of fancy ; Mr. Reade, also my friend, whose poem of "Italy" is so full of classical grace ; Mr. Beckford, original in every act and word, whose "Vathek" was as strange a work as his Tower on Lansdown,

and whose fine place at Fonthill should never have been built or never have been destroyed ; last and best, Mr. Landor, of whom, with his vivacity, his vigour, and fertility of thought, it was difficult to believe that his first work was published in the last century, and who had gathered together, in a narrow room, specimens of art—"little bits," as he called them, which might put to shame far larger collections. It was impossible not to admire ; but it was dangerous to praise in that room ; for the proprietor had a trick of bestowing, which caught one so unawares, that one could hardly express the gratitude for the surprise : it was felt though, however ill-spoken. He gave me a small picture, by Wright, of Derby,—a night view of Vesuvius, in which the two lights, the moon and the volcano, are shining down upon the sea as brightly and as distinctly as they could have done in his own verse. These were the literary names of Bath ; and there was a living artist too—Mr. Barker—an interesting old man, who had, with an artist's improvidence, devoted years of labour to a fine, but immovable fresco—the taking of a Greek island by the Turks—painted on the walls of his own house. The talent has proved hereditary. I saw there a sketch by his son, of the death of the Duke of Orleans ; a mere sketch, but one in which the homeliness and evident truth of the accessories added much to the pathos of the scene. I do not remember in art a more touching rendering of family grief ; it struck the heart like a cry.

The neighbourhood of Bath is still more beautiful than the city. Even the suburbs, where tree and garden, hill and valley, railway and river, mingle so picturesquely with the rich tint of the stone of which the houses are built, and the striking architectural forms ; and where pretty old churches and churchyards, rich in yew and lime, seem to unite town and country. Of the surrounding villages, Batheaston was memorable for the blue-stocking vagaries of a certain Lady Miller, a Somersetshire Clemence Isaure, who some seventy years ago offered prizes for the best verses thrown into an antique vase ; the prize consisting, not of a golden violet, but of a wreath of laurel ; and the whole affair producing, as was to be expected, a great deal more ridicule than poetry. Claverton, another pretty village, was celebrated for a travestie of a different order—the curious book called "The Spiritual Quixote,"

written by Mr. Graves ; and Weston, prettiest of all, is the delight and resort of poets, if not their residence.

But by far the most interesting spot in the neighbourhood of Bath is Prior Park, built by Allen the bookseller, the friend of Pope and the original of Fielding's Allworthy, afterwards the property and residence of Warburton, and now the site of a Roman Catholic college.

I shall never forget my first visit to this most beautiful place, on a sunny, dewy day, between May and April, the first of one month or the last of the other, the very fairest moment of the year, all nature smiling around me, and every pleasure enhanced by the delightful manners of Dr. Baines, the then principal of the establishment.

The house is an elegant and stately erection, separated by long corridors from two wings almost equal to itself in size and extent. The portico is of the noblest architecture, and double flights of steps, flight after flight, exquisite in design and proportion, stretch down from the magnificent colonnade to the sloping lawn. Standing under the lofty pillars, leaning over the marble balustrade, with a splendid peacock close beside me expanding his gorgeous plumage to the sun, I thought I had never beheld a scene that formed so perfect a picture to the eye and to the mind.

In the foreground the turfу lawn, dotted here and there with graceful shrubs, descended to a sweep of calm, bright waters as clear as crystal, giving back the fleecy clouds and the deep-blue sky, and fringed in on either side by down-dropping elms, columnar poplars, and majestic cedars. Across the lake the city presented itself in its most picturesque point of view : the old buttressed abbey, church towers and spires, streets, squares, and crescents, rising each over each, mixed with park and gardens, and crowned by the high hills of Lansdown and Mr. Beckford's tower. All was gay and glittering in the tender verdure of spring, leaves just bursting, or just burst, a sweet balminess in the air, and the odour of woods and flowers floating around us, with the song of birds and the thousand sounds of new-born insects. It was an hour never to be forgotten!

He whose intellect and kindness lent attraction even to that loveliest scenery died soon after. The charm of Dr. Baines' conversation is difficult to describe. He was the son

of a Yorkshire farmer, and had risen to the rank of Vicar Apostolic, titular Bishop of some Eastern see, and to the highest influence among his English co-religionists by the united power of talent and of character. The little tint of simplicity which he retained from his rustic origin went well with his courtly bearing. That small touch of provincial *naïveté* gave to his high-bred polish the finishing grace of truth. It was charming to see him surrounded by the boys of one wing, Howards, Talbots, Fitzgeralds, O'Connells—for O'Connell was then “a name to conjure with”—and the elder students of the other building, young men in college cap and gown. It was a double establishment, one a school for the purpose of secular education, the other a seminary for the priesthood; but all the inhabitants, elder or younger, without any distinction, seemed to claim Dr. Baines as the general father. He reigned in the hearts of all.

Full of taste and information, he avoided everything that approached to controversy, and addressed himself to the topics most likely to interest his hearers, as if they had been precisely those most interesting to himself. He showed me Miss Agnew's outline engravings, speaking of her “Geraldine” (then recently published) with high but discriminating praise, and regretting her retirement to a convent, a thing he rarely saw cause to recommend. He showed me a little volume of Latin hymns, the hymns Sir Walter Scott liked so well, and told me that Mr. Moore, on his last visit to Prior Park, had at his request taken away a copy. “I hope,” said he, “that that great artist in words may give us an English version of some of the few poems, professedly religious, which have always had attractions for poets. It would be a happy close of a literary life, the prayer before going to rest.”

He gave a most amusing account of Cardinal Mezzofante—a man in all but his marvellous gift of tongues as simple as an infant. “The last time I was in Rome,” said he, “we went together to the Propaganda, and heard speeches delivered in thirty-five or thirty-six languages by converts of various nations. Amongst them were natives of no less than three tribes of Tartars, each talking his own dialect. They did not understand each other, but the Cardinal understood them all, and could tell with critical nicety the points in which one jargon differed from the others. We dined together; and I

entreathed him, having been in the Tower of Babel all the morning, to let us stick to English for the rest of the day. Accordingly he did stick to English, which he spoke as fluently as we do, and with the same accuracy not only of grammar but of idiom. His only trip was in saying, 'that was before the time when I remember,' instead of 'before my time.' Once, too, I thought him mistaken in the pronunciation of a word. But when I returned to England," continued Dr. Baines, "I found that my way was either provincial or old-fashioned, and that I was wrong and he was right. In the course of the evening his servant brought a Welsh Bible which had been left for him. 'Ah,' said he, 'this is the very thing! I wanted to learn Welsh!' Then he remembered that it was in all probability not the authorised version. 'Never mind,' he said, 'I don't think it will do me any harm.' Six weeks after, I met the Cardinal, and asked him how he got on with his Welsh. 'Oh!' replied he, 'I know it now. I have done with it.'"

I do believe that had Dr. Baines been spared, his wisdom, his spirit of conciliation, and his thorough knowledge of the temper of England, would have prevented the disastrous feud which must grieve all who hold the great Christian tenets of charity and love.

Traces of the manner in which people lived at Bath, whilst it was a small inconvenient town much resorted to by the sick and the idle, may be found scattered up and down a great variety of books. The list that crowds upon me would fill many pages. Letter-writers, dramatists, poets, biographers all, first or last, betake themselves or their heroes to "the Bath." Sheridan has made it the scene, not of his most famous, but of his most charming play; and Bob Acres with his courage oozing out of his fingers' ends, and the comfortable suggestion that "there is snug lying in the abbey," will last as long as comedy exists.

Perhaps the best description of Bath in its heyday of fashion and popularity a century ago, is to be found in the verse of Anstey, burlesque although it be.

* M. Kossuth, who, though no Mezzofante, either in simplicity or the gift of tongues, has a command over our language very rare in a foreigner, says that he learnt English in a Turkish prison from three books, Shakespeare, the Bible, and an Hungarian dictionary.

“The New Bath Guide,” written in a light and tripping manner, well adapted to the subject and little previously known, had an immense vogue in its day; a vogue all the greater that some of the characters were supposed to be real, and the poignancy of personal satire was added to general pleasantry. It is so far forgotten by the general reader, that the extracts upon which I may venture will probably be as good as new. I do not apologize for a few omissions rendered necessary by the better manners of our times.

The plan of the work is very simple: Mr. Simkin Blunderhead, the good-humoured, gullible, but not silly heir of a north country knight, is sent with his sister Prudence, his cousin Jenny, and their waiting-maid, to drink the waters and look at the world. The story is told in letters from Simkin to his mother, and from Miss Jenny to a female friend:—

We are all at a wonderful distance from home,
 Two hundred and sixty long miles are we come!
 And now you'll rejoice, my dear mother, to hear
 We are safely arrived at the sign of “The Bear.”
 As we all came for health, as a body may say,
 I sent for a doctor the very next day;
 And the doctor was pleased, though so short was the warning.
 To come to our lodgings the very next morning.
 He looked very thoughtful and grave to be sure;
 And I said to myself—There's no hopes of a cure!
 But I thought I should faint when I saw him, dear mother,
 Feel my pulse with one hand, with a watch in the other;
 No token of death that is heard in the night
 Could ever have put me so much in a fright;
 Thinks I—’tis all over—my sentence is past,
 And now he is counting how long I shall last.

Then follows a good deal of medical detail and of doctor's Latin very comically dragged into the verse. In a subsequent letter, Mr. Anstey, who seems to have had as great a horror of the faculty as Molière himself, gives a report of a consultation and its consequences:—

If ever I ate a good supper at night,
 I dreamt of the devil and waked in a fright;
 And so as I grew every day worse and worse,
 The doctor advised me to send for a nurse.
 And the nurse was so willing my health to restore,
 She advised me to send for a few doctors more;
 For when any difficult work's to be done,
 Many heads can dispatch it much better than one;

And I find there are doctors enough in this place
 If you want to consult in a dangerous case.
 So they all met together, and thus began talking :
 " Good doctor, I'm yours—"tis a fine day for walking ;
 Sad news in the papers—heaven knows who's to blame !
 The Colonies seem to be all in a flame—
 This Stamp Act, no doubt, might be good for the crown,
 But I fear 'tis a pill that will never go down.—
 What can Portugal mean ?—Is she going to stir up
 Convulsions and heats in the bowels of Europe ?
 'Twill be fatal if England relapses again
 From the ill-blood and humours of Bourbon and Spain."
 Says I : " My good doctors, I can't understand
 Why the deuce you take so many patients in hand ;
 No doubt ye are all of ye great politicians,
 But at present my bowels have need of physicians,
 Consider my case in the light it deserves,
 And pity the state of my stomach and nerves."
 But a tight little doctor began a dispute
 About administration, Newcastle and Bute,
 Talked much of economy—

* * * * *

" Come, let's be gone,
 We've another bad case to consider at one."

So thus they brushed off, each his cane at his nose,
 When Jenny came in who had heard all their prose :
 " I'll teach them," says she, " at their next consultation
 To come and take fees for the good of the nation."
 I could not conceive what the deuce 'twas she meant,
 But she seized all the stuff that the doctors had sent,
 And out of the window she flung it down souse,
 As the first politician went out of the house.
 Decoctions and syrups around him all flew,
 Pills, boluses, jalep, and apozem too ;
 His wig had the luck an emulsion to meet,
 And squash went a gallipot under his feet.

Having turned out the doctors, the whole party improve
 both in health and spirits ; Miss Jenny picks up a military
 lover, under whose auspices Simkin turns beau :—

No city, dear mother, this city excels
 In charming sweet sounds both of fiddles and bells,
 I thought, like a fool, that they only would ring
 For a wedding, or judge, or the birth of a king ;
 But I found 'twas for me that the good-natured people
 Rang so hard, that I thought they would pull down the steeple ;
 So I took out my purse, as I hate to be shabby,
 And paid all the men when they came from the abbey.
 Yet some think it strange they should make such a riot
 In a place where sick folk would be glad to be quiet.

Tabitha Rust, the waiting-maid, takes a bath :—

'Twas a glorious sight to behold the fair sex
 All wading with gentlemen up to their necks ;
 And to-day many persons of rank and condition
 Were boiled by command of an able physician.
 Dean Spavin, Dean Mangy, and Doctor De Squirt,
 Were all sent from Cambridge to rub off their dirt ;
 Judge Bore, and the worthy old Counsellor Pest,
 Joined issue at once, and went in with the rest ;
 Old Baron Vanteaser, a man of great wealth,
 Brought his lady the Baroness here for her health ;
 Miss Scratchit went in, and the Countess of Scales,
 Both ladies of very great fashion in Wales ;
 Then all on a sudden two persons of worth,
 My Lady Pandora Macscrury, came forth,
 With General Sulphur, arrived from the North.
 So Tabby you see had the honour of washing
 With folks of condition and very high fashion ;
 But in spite of good company, poor little soul,
 She shook both her ears like a mouse in a bowl.

This description of the two sexes bathing in common in the chief water-drinking place of England so recently as during the American war, would seem incredible if it were not confirmed by an almost contemporary writer, Smollett, in his last, and incomparably his best novel, "The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker."

Our friend Simkin prepares for a ball :—

Thank heaven, of late, my dear mother, my face is
 Not a little regarded at all public places :
 For I ride in a chair with my hands in a muff,
 And have bought a silk coat, and embroidered the cuff ;
 But the weather was cold, and the coat it was thin,
 So the tailor advised me to line it with skin.
 But what with my Nivernois hat can compare,
 Bag-wig and laced ruffles and black solitaire ?
 And what can a man of true fashion denote
 Like a yard of good ribbon tied under his throat ?
 My buckles and box are in exquisite taste ;
 The one is of paper, the other of paste ;
 And my stockings of silk are just come from the hosier,
 For to-night I'm to dance with the charming Miss Toser.

He goes to the ball. After two or three pages of rhapsodies :—

But hark ! now they strike the melodious string,
 The vaulted roof echoes, the mansions all ring ;
 At the sound of the hautboy, the bass and the fiddle,
 Sir Boreas Blubber steps forth in the middle,

Like a hollyhock, noble, majestic, and tall,
 Sir Boreas Blubber first opens the ball.
 Sir Boreas, great in the minuet known,
 Since the day that for dancing his talents were shown,
 Where the science is practised by gentlemen grown.
 How he puts on his hat with a smile on his face,
 And delivers his hand with an exquisite grace !
 How gently he offers Miss Carrot before us,
 Miss Carrot Fitz-oozer a niece of Lord Porus !
 How nimbly he paces, how active and light !
 One never can judge of a man at first sight ;
 But as near as I guess from the size of his calf
 He may weigh about twenty-three stone and a half.
 Now why should I mention a hundred or more
 Who went the same circle as others before
 To a tune that they played us a hundred times o'er ?

I must find room for some scraps of a public breakfast.
 Simkin invokes the desire of popularity :—

'T was you made my Lord Ragamuffin come here,
 Who they say has been lately created a peer,
 And to-day with extreme complaisance and respect asked
 All the people at Bath to a general breakfast.

You've heard of my Lady Bunbutter, no doubt,
 How she loves an assembly fandango or rout ;
 No lady in London is half so expert
 At a snug private party her friends to divert ;
 But they say that of late she's grown sick of the town,
 And often to Bath condescends to come down :
 Her ladyship's favourite house is "The Bear,"
 Her chariot and servants and horses are there.

Now my lord had the honour of coming down post
 To pay his respects to so famous a toast ;
 In hopes he her ladyship's favour might win,
 By playing the part of a host at an inn.
 He said it would greatly our pleasure promote
 If we all for Spring Gardens set out in a boat ;
 Though I never as yet could his reason explain
 Why we all sallied forth in the wind and the rain.
 For sure such confusion was never yet known,
 Here a cap and a hat, there a cardinal blown :
 While his lordship embroidered and powdered all o'er
 Was bowing and handing the ladies ashore.
 How the misses did huddle and scuddle and run,
 One would think to be wet must be very good fun ;
 For by wagging their gown-tails they seemed to take pains
 To moisten their pinions like ducks when it rains ;
 And 't was pretty to see, how like birds of a feather
 The people of quality all flocked together ;
 All pressing, addressing, caressing, and fond,
 Just as so many ganders and geese in a pond.

You 've read all their names in the news I suppose,
But for fear you have not, take the list as it goes :

There was Lady Greasewrister,
And Madam Van Twister,
Her Ladyship's sister ;
Lord Cram and Lord Vulter,
Sir Brandish O'Culter,
With Marshal Carouser,
And old Lady Drouser,
And the great Hanoverian Baron Pansmouser,
Besides many others who all in the rain went
On purpose to honour this grand entertainment.
The company made a most brilliant appearance,
And ate bread and butter with great perseverance ;
All the chocolate, too, that my lord set before 'em
The ladies despatched with the utmost decorum ;
And had I a voice that was stronger than steel,
With twice fifty tongues to express what I feel,
And as many good mouths, yet I never could utter
All the speeches my lord made to Lady Bunbutter !

Now why should the Muse, my dear mother, relate
The misfortunes that fall to the lot of the great ?
As homeward we came — 'tis with sorrow you 'll hear
What a dreadful disaster attended the peer :
In landing old Lady Bumfidget and daughter
This obsequious lord tumbled into the water ;
But a nymph of the flood brought him safe to the boat,
And I left all the ladies a cleaning his coat.

A worst disaster than that which befel Lord Ragamuffin is
in store for our good-humoured letter-writer. His friend,
Captain Cormorant, who by the way turns out to be no cap-
tain at all, and who had undertaken, amongst other fashion-
able accomplishments, to initiate him in the mysteries of
lansquenet, cheats him out of seven hundred pounds ; so that
Miss Jenny loses her lover and her cousin his money at one
stroke. Prudence and Tabitha also come in for their share of
misadventures ; and the whole party return, crestfallen and
discomfited, to the good old Lady Blunderhead and their York-
shire Manor House.

XXVI.

AMERICAN POETS.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER—FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

I DID a great injustice the other day when I said that the Americans had at last a great poet. I should have remembered that poets, like sorrows,

“Come not single spies
But in battalions.”

There is commonly a flight of those singing-birds, as we had ourselves at the beginning of the present century ; and besides Professor Longfellow, Bryant, Willis, Lowell, and Poe do the highest honour to America.

The person, however, whom I should have most injured myself in forgetting, for my injustice could not damage a reputation such as his, was John G. Whittier, the most intensely national of American bards.

Himself a member of the Society of Friends, the two most remarkable of his productions are on subjects in which that active although peaceful sect take a lively interest : the anti-slavery cause, in the present day ; and the persecution of the Quakers, which casts such deep disgrace on the memory of the Pilgrim Fathers and their immediate successors in the early history of New England.

Strange it seems to us in this milder age, that these men, themselves flying from the intolerance of the Old Country, should, the moment they attained to anything like power, nay even whilst disputing with the native Indians, not the possession of the soil, but the mere privilege of dwelling peaceably therein, at once stiffened themselves into a bigotry and a persecution not excelled by the horrors of the Star Chamber ! should, as soon as they attained the requisite physical force, chase and scourge, and burn and sell their fellow-creatures into slavery, for that very exercise of private judgment on religious subjects, that very determination to interpret freely the Book of Life, which had driven themselves into exile ! Oh ! many are the causes of thankfulness which we owe to the

Providence that cast us upon a more enlightened age ; but for nothing ought we more devoutly to render thanks to God than that in our days the deeds recited in Mr. Whittier's splendid ballad of "Cassandra Southcote" would be impossible.

His poem itself can scarcely be overrated. The march of the verse has something that reminds us of the rhythm of Mr. Macaulay's fine classical ballads, something which is resemblance, not imitation ; whilst in the tone of mind of the author, his earnestness, his eloquence, his pathos, there is much that resembles the constant force and occasional beauty of Ebenezer Elliot. Whilst equally earnest, however, and equally eloquent, there is in Mr. Whittier, not only a more sustained, but a higher tone than that of the Corn-law Rhymer. It would indeed be difficult to tell the story of a terrible oppression and a merciful deliverance, a deliverance springing from the justice, the sympathy, the piety of *our* countrymen, the English captains, with more striking effect. I transcribe the prose introduction, which is really necessary to render such an outrage credible, although one feels intuitively that the story must have been true, precisely because it was too strangely wicked for fiction.

"This ballad has its foundation upon a somewhat remarkable event in the history of Puritan intolerance. Two young persons, son and daughter of Lawrence Southwick, of Salem, who had himself been imprisoned and deprived of all his property for having entertained two Quakers at his house, were fined ten pounds each for non-attendance at church, which they were unable to pay. The case being represented to the General Court at Boston, that body issued an order which may still be seen on the court records, bearing the signature of Edward Rawson, Secretary, by which the Treasurer of the County was 'fully empowered to sell the said persons to any of the English nation at Virginia or Barbadoes to answer said fines.' An attempt was made to carry this barbarous order into execution, but no shipmaster was found willing to convey them to the West Indies. *Vide* Sewall's History, pp. 225-6, G. Bishop."

To the God of all true mercies let my blessing rise to-day,
From the scoffer and the cruel He hath plucked the spoil away,—
Yea, He, who cooled the furnace around the faithful three,
And tamed the Chaldean lions, hath set His handmaid free !

Last night I saw the sunset melt through my prison bars,
 Last night across my damp earth-floor fell the pale gleam of stars,
 In the coldness and the darkness all through the long night time,
 My grated window whitened with autumn's early rime.

Alone in that dark sorrow, hour after hour crept by ;
 Star after star looked palely in, and sank adown the sky ;
 No sound amid night's stillness, save that which seemed to be
 The dull and heavy beating of the pulses of the sea.

All night I sate unsleeping, for I knew that on the morrow
 The ruler and the cruel priest would mock me in my sorrow,
 Dragged to their place of market, and bargained for and sold
 Like a lamb before the shambles, like a heifer from the fold !

Oh the weakness of the flesh was there, the shrinking and the shame ;
 And the low voice of the Tempter like whispers to me came :
 " Why sittst thou thus forlornly ? " the wicked murmur said,
 " Damp walls thy bower of beauty, cold earth thy maiden bed ?

" Where be the smiling faces and voices soft and sweet
 Seen in thy father's dwelling, heard in the pleasant street ?
 Where be the youths, whose glances the summer Sabbath through
 Turned tenderly and timidly unto thy father's pew ?

" Why sittst thou here, Cassandra ? Bethink thee with what mirth
 Thy happy schoolmates gather around the warm bright hearth ;
 How the crimson shadows tremble, on foreheads white and fair,
 On eyes of merry girlhood half hid in golden hair.

" Not for thee the hearth-fire brightens, not for thee kind words are
 spoken ;
 Not for thee the nuts of Wenham Woods by laughing boys are broken ;
 No first-fruits of the orchard within thy lap are laid,
 For thee no flowers of autumn the youthful rustics braid.

" O weak deluded maiden ! by crazy fancies led,
 With wild and raving railers an evil path to tread ;
 To leave a wholesome worship and teaching pure and sound,
 And mate with maniac women, loose-haired and sackcloth bound.

" Mad scoffers of the priesthood, who mock at things divine,
 Who rail against the pulpit and holy bread and wine,
 Sore from their cart-tail scourgings and from the pillory lame,
 Rejoicing in their wretchedness and glorying in their shame.

" And what a fate awaits thee ? a sadly toiling slave,
 Dragging the slowly lengthening chain of bondage to the grave !
 Think of thy woman's nature, subdued in hopeless thrall,
 The easy prey of any, the scoff and scorn of all ! "

Oh !—ever as the Tempter spoke, and feeble nature's fears
 Wrung drop by drop the scalding flow of unavailing tears,
 I wrestled down the evil thoughts, and strove in silent prayer,
 To feel—oh Helper of the weak ! that Thou indeed wert there !

I thought of Paul and Silas, within Philippi's cell,
 And how from Peter's sleeping limbs the prison shackles fell,
 Till I seemed to hear the trailing of an angel's robe of white,
 And to feel a blessed presence invisible to sight.

* * * *

Slow broke the grey cold morning, again the sunshine fell
 Flecked with the shade of bar and grate within my lonely cell ;
 The hoar-frost matted on the wall, and upward from the street
 Came careless laugh and idle word and tread of passing feet.

At length the heavy bolts fell back, my door was open cast,
 And slowly at the sheriff's side up the long street I passed ;
 I heard the murmur round me, and felt, but dared not see,
 How from every door and window the people gazed on me.

* * * *

We paused at length where at my feet the sunlit waters broke
 On glaring reach of shining beach, and shingly wall of rock ;
 The merchants' ships lay idly there in hard clear lines on high
 Tracing with rope and slender spar their network on the sky.

And there were ancient citizens, cloak-wrapped and grave and cold,
 And grim and stout sea-captains, with faces bronzed and old,
 And on his horse with Rawson, his cruel clerk at hand,
 Sate dark and haughty Endicott, the ruler of the land.

* * * *

But grey heads shook, and young brows knit, the while the sheriff
 That law the wicked rulers against the poor have made. [read
 Who to their house of Rimmon and idol priesthood bring
 No bended knee of worship, nor gainful offering.

Then to the stout sea-captains the sheriff turning said :
 " Which of ye worthy seamen will take this Quaker maid ?
 In the Isle of fair Barbadoes, or on Virginia's shore,
 You may hold her at a higher price than Indian girl or Moor."

Grim and silent stood the captains ; and when again he cried,
 " Speak out, my worthy seamen ! " no voice or sign replied ;
 But I felt a hard hand press my own, and kind words met my ear ;—
 " God bless thee, and preserve thee, my gentle girl and dear ! "

A weight seemed lifted off my heart—a pitying friend was nigh,
 I felt it in his hard rough hand, I saw it in his eye ;
 And when again the sheriff spake, that voice so kind to me
 Growled back its stormy answer like the roaring of the sea.

" Pile my ship with bars of silver—pack with coins of Spanish gold
 From keelpiece up to deck-plank, the roomage of her hold,
 By the living God who made me ! I would sooner in yon bay
 Sink ship and crew and cargo than bear this child away ! "

" Well answered, worthy captain ; shame on their cruel laws ! "
 Ran through the crowd in murmurs loud the people's just applause.
 " Like the herdsman of Tekoa in Israel of old
 Shall we see the poor and righteous again for silver sold ? "

I looked on haughty Endicott ; with weapon half-way drawn,
 Swept round the throng his lion glare of bitter hate and scorn ;
 Fiercely he drew his bridle-rein, and turned in silence back,
 And sneering priest and baffled clerk rode murmuring in his track.

Hard after them the sheriff looked in bitterness of soul, [roll ;
 Thrice smote his staff upon the ground, and crushed his parchment
 "Good friends," he said, "since both have fled, the ruler and the
 Judge ye if from their further work I be not well released." [priest,

Loud was the cheer, which, full and clear, swept round the silent bay,
 As with kind words and kinder looks he bade me go my way ;
 For He who turns the courses of the streamlet of the glen
 And the river of great waters, had turned the hearts of men.

Oh, at that hour the very earth seemed changed beneath my eye,
 A holier wonder round me rose, the blue walls of the sky,
 A lovelier light on rock and hill and stream and woodland lay,
 And softer lapsed on sunnier sands the waters of the bay.

Thanksgiving to the Lord of life ! to Him all praises be,
 Who from the hands of evil men hath set his handmaid free !
 All praise to Him before whose power the mighty are afraid,
 Who takes the crafty in the maze which for the poor is laid !

* * * *

I add the opening stanzas of an equally powerful and eloquent poem, with the few lines of explanation prefixed by the author.

MASSACHUSETTS TO VIRGINIA.

Written on reading an account of the proceedings of the citizens of Norfolk (Virginia) in reference to George Latimer, the alleged fugitive slave, the result of whose case in Massachusetts will probably be similar to that of the negro, Somerset, in England, in 1772.

The blast from Freedom's northern hills upon its southern way
 Bears greeting to Virginia from Massachusetts Bay :—
 No word of haughty challenging, nor battle-bugle's peal,
 Nor steady tread of marching files, nor clang of horseman's steel.

No trains of deep-mouthed cannon along our highways go—
 Around our silent arsenals untrodden lies the snow ;
 And to the land-breeze of our ports upon their errands far,
 A thousand sails of commerce swell, but none are spread for war.

We hear thy threats, Virginia ! thy stormy words and high,
 Swell harshly on the southern winds which melt along our sky ;
 Yet not one brown hard hand foregoes its honest labour here ;
 No hewer of our mountain oak suspends his axe in fear.

Wild are the waves that lash the reefs along St. George's bank,
Cold on the shore of Labrador the fog lies white and dank ; [man
Through storm and wave and blinding mist stout are the hearts which
The fishing-smacks of Marble Head, the sea-boats of Cape Ann.

The cold north light and wintry sun glare on their icy forms
Bent grimly o'er their straining-lines, or wrestling with the storms ;
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as the waves they roam,
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against their rocky home.

What means the Old Dominion ? Hath she forgot the day
When o'er her conquered valleys swept the Briton's steel array ?
How, side by side with sons of her's, the Massachusetts men
Encountered Tarleton's charge of fire, and stout Cornwallis then ?

Forgets she how the Bay States, in answer to the call
Of her old House of Burgesses spoke out from Fanueil Hall ?
When echoing back her Henry's cry, came pealing on each breath
Of northern winds the thrilling sounds of "Liberty or Death !"

What asks the Old Dominion ? If now her sons have proved
False to their father's memory, false to the faith they loved ;
If she can scoff at Freedom, and its Great Charter spurn,
Must we of Massachusetts from Truth and Duty turn ?

We hunt your bondmen flying from slavery's hateful hell—
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the bloodhound's yell—
We gather at your summons above our father's graves,
From Freedom's holy altar-horns to tear your wretched slaves !

Thank God ! not yet so vilely can Massachusetts bow,
The spirit of her early time is with her even now ;
Dream not because her pilgrim blood moves slow, and calm, and cool,
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a sister's slave and tool !

All that a *Sister* State should be, all that a *free* State may,
Heart, hand and purse we proffer, as in our early day ;
But that one dark loathsome burden, ye must stagger with alone,
And reap the bitter harvest which ye yourselves have sown !

If slavery be a reproach, and too just a reproach it is to the Southern States, surely the citizens of New England may justly pride themselves upon the poetry which has arisen out of the sin and shame of their brethren. Time will inevitably chase away the crime, for national crimes are in their very nature transient, whilst the noble effusions that sprang from that foul source, whether in the verse of the poet, or the speeches of the orator, are imperishable.

Another of my sins of omission is Mr. Halleck, a poet of a different stamp, with less of earnestness and fire, but more of grace and melody. How musical are these stanzas on the Music of Nature !

Young thoughts have music in them, love
 And happiness their theme;
 And music wanders in the wind
 That lulls a morning dream.
 And there are angel voices heard
 In childhood's frolic hours,
 When life is but an April day
 Of sunshine and of flowers.

There's music in the forest leaves
 When summer winds are there,
 And in the laugh of forest girls
 That braid their sunny hair.
 The first wild bird, that drinks the dew,
 From violets of the spring,
 Has music in his voice, and in
 The fluttering of his wing.

There's music in the dash of waves
 When the swift bark cleaves the foam ;
 There's music heard upon her deck
 The mariner's song of home.
 When moon and starbeams smiling meet
 At midnight on the sea—

* * * *

To day—the forest leaves are green,
 They'll wither on the morrow ;
 And the maiden's laugh be changed ere long
 To the widow's wail of sorrow ;
 Come with the winter snows and ask
 Where are the forest birds ?
 The answer is a silent one
 More eloquent than words.

The moonlight music of the waves
 In storms is heard no more,
 When the living lightning mocks the wreck
 At midnight on the shore.

* * * *

Still better than these verses are the stanzas on the death
 of his brother poet Drake :—

Green be the turf above thee,
 Friend of my better days ;
 None knew thee but to love thee,
 None named thee but to praise.

Tears fell, when thou wert dying,
 From eyes unused to weep ;
 And long where thou art lying
 Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts whose truth was proven
 Like thine are laid in earth,
 There should a wreath be woven
 To tell the world their worth ;
 And I, who woke each morrow
 To clasp thy hand in mine,
 Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
 Whose weal and woe were thine,—
 It should be mine to braid it
 Around thy faded brow ;
 But I've in vain essayed it,
 And feel I cannot now.
 While memory bids me weep thee
 Nor thoughts nor words are free,
 The grief is fixed too deeply
 That mourns a man like thee.

This is a true and manly record of a true and manly friendship. There is no doubting the sorrow, honourable alike to the Departed and the Survivor. May he be so loved and so mourned !

XXVII.

VOLUMINOUS AUTHORS.

LOVE OF LONG BOOKS.

HARGRAVE'S STATE TRIALS.

ALL my life long I have delighted in voluminous works ; in other words, I have delighted in that sort of detail which permits so intimate a familiarity with the subjects of which it treats. This fancy of mine seems most opposed to the spirit of an age fertile in abridgments and selections. And yet my taste is hardly, perhaps, so singular as it seems : witness the six-volume biographies of Scott and Southey, which everybody wishes as long again as they are ; witness the voluminous histories of single events—the Conquest of Peru and of Mexico by Mr. Prescott, the French Revolution of M. Thiers, the Girondins of M. de Lamartine. Even the most successful writers of modern fiction have found the magical effects of bringing the public into intimacy with their heroes. Hence Mr.

Cooper (dead I regret to say, but yet imperishably alive in his graphic novels) extended to fifteen volumes the adventures of Leather-Stocking, until every reader offered his hand to greet the honest backwoodsman as if he had been a daily visitor ; and Balzac, a still greater artist, brought the same *dramatis personæ*, the same set of walking ladies and gentlemen, to fill up the background of his scenes of the "Life of Paris and of the Provinces," with an illusion so perfect and so masterly, that I myself, who ought to have some acquaintance with the artifices of story-telling, was so completely deceived as to inquire by letter of the friend who had introduced me to those remarkable books, whether the Horace Bianchon, whom I had just found consulted for the twentieth time in some grave malady, were a make-believe physician, or a real living man. To which my friend, herself no novice in this sort of deception, replied that he was certainly a fictitious personage, for that she had written two years ago to Paris to ask the same question.

Even in this world of Beauties, and of Extracts, I do not believe myself quite alone in my love of the elaborate and the minute ; and yet I doubt if many people contemplate very long very big books with the sense of coming enjoyment which such a prospect gives me ; and few shrink, as I do, with aversion and horror from that invention of the enemy—an Abridgment. I never shall forget the shock I experienced in seeing Bruce, that opprobrium of an unbelieving age, that great and graphic traveller, whose eight or nine goodly volumes took such possession of me, that I named a whole colony of Bantams after his Abyssinian princes and princesses, calling a little golden strutter of a cock after that arch-tyrant the Ras Michael ; and a speckled hen, the beauty of the poultry-yard, Ozoro Ester, in honour of the Ras's favourite wife—I never felt greater disgust than at seeing this magnificent work cut down to a thick, dumpy volume, seven inches by five ; except, perhaps, when I happened to light upon another pet book—Drinkwater's "Siege of Gibraltar," where I had first learned to tremble at the grim realities of war, had watched day by day the firing of the red-hot balls, had groped my way through the galleries, and taken refuge in the casemates, degraded from the fair proportions of a goodly quarto into the thin and meagre pamphlet of a lending

library, losing a portion of its life-like truth with every page that was cut away.

Besides books long in themselves, I love large collections of works of the same class. Shakespeare I had always known, of course. But what joy it was to wander at will through the vellum-bound folio of Beaumont and Fletcher, and then to diverge to Ben Jonson, to Massinger, to Ford, to Webster, to the countless riches of Dodsley's Old Plays! How pleasant to get together books united only by a common subject, collections of English ballads, Percy, Weber, Heber, Ritson, Scott, the Chronicles of Froissart and de Joinville, of Holinshed and of Hall, the endless memoirs of Louis the Fourteenth's day, or the still more endless Journals and Diaries, whether by prince or valet, whether false or true, that show us vividly as in life him whom Beranger has called "the great poet of modern times," the marvellous Napoleon!

Or again, books by the same author: the novels of Richardson; the letters of Walpole—will they ever come to an end! I hope not. The majestic verse and graceful prose of Dryden, whose prefaces contain some of our earliest criticism and some of our best; the wisdom of Bacon; the wit of Swift; the easy truth of Jane Austen; the matchless charm of Scott. I have read of Prynne and Defoe more than would break down a writing-table, and about the French Revolution as much as would fill a room.

Nor do I perceive much change in this devouring passion. Nearly forty years ago I had occasion to acquire as much knowledge as I could on the subject of the Commonwealth, and it was a labour of love. From the lives of Hutchinson and Fairfax, so charmingly told by their loving wives, and the exciting histories of Burnet and Clarendon to the dullest State Papers of the Record Office, my ravenous appetite "had stomach for them all." Four winters since I was reading for my own pleasure Lucas Monsigny's "Life of Mirabeau." It was a hired book, a Brussels edition, in ten volumes, from Mr. Rolandi's excellent Foreign Library in Berners Street, and I had only the first four. Full of Mirabeau, of that strange creature his father, and that little less remarkable personage the Bailli, his uncle, worse than the vain, tyrannical father in my mind, because he had a perception of the stupendous intellect and noble nature with which they were dealing, and

yet submitted in all things to that heartless coxcomb, the Marquis ; full of these people, I could not think of waiting until I had written to London, I should never have closed my eyes ; so I ran off to a most kind neighbour, whose rich library and constant indulgence afforded me some chance of supplying this pressing want. "Vie de Mirabeau, par son fils adoptif ?" said the fair daughter, whom I encountered in the park. "Yes," answered I, with a thousand thanks : "that life of Mirabeau, if Sir Henry happen to have it. If not, any life, any book, by or about him, to serve until I can get the true thing !" And so I went my way ! In a few hours a horse and cart arrived at my door, containing a great trunk, and a note with a key enclosed. And this precious trunk was full of Mirabeau : orations, letters, lives—all of his own writing, that a woman might fitly read, and almost all that had been written about him, from Dumont's cold unworthy book to the fine *étude* of Victor Hugo. I do not think I even opened a newspaper until I had gone through the whole collection.

One winter I revelled in all the lore I could procure regarding beasts, and birds, and insects, and reptiles ; another I solaced myself by a course of topography, ponderous county histories which are called so dull and are often so amusing, full of odd bits of legend and story and traits of manners that one finds nowhere else ; and once I beguiled the long Christmas evenings by looking through the whole series of the "Monthly Review," reading the contemporary judgments on Hume and Robertson, on Gibbon and Johnson, on Fielding and Smollett, on Gray and Mason, on Goldsmith and Sterne, and comparing the criticism of the day with the abiding verdict of posterity. Anybody not willing to encounter the trouble of turning over above a hundred heavy volumes may procure for himself a recreation nearly analogous by reading the correspondence which Mr. Mitford has just so ably edited between the before-mentioned Horace Walpole and Mason ; and yet that is hardly a fair example. Prince of letter-writers as Walpole was, created as it seems for nothing else but to chronicle with the adroitest of touches the gossip of the day, it is something wonderful how seldom even by accident he shows the slightest perception of the high, the good, or the true. There is hardly a great name of his own time at which he

does not sneer. In one passage he ignores them in a body, and says, "Dr. Johnson and the crew whose names I forget," or words to that effect. He classes Garth as a poet with Milton; chooses Goldsmith as the object of his supreme contempt, and even amongst his own correspondents he had quarrelled with Gray, and was about to quarrel with Mason. He can hardly be said to reflect contemporary opinion. Perhaps we of the last generation have seen something more nearly approaching it in the judgment of the "Quarterly" upon Keats, and of the "Edinburgh Review" upon Wordsworth. Time is the one great critic.

Of all collected works, those that I liked best, better than the poets from Chaucer to Tennyson, better than the dramatists from Shakespeare to Talfourd, were those most real and most exciting of all dramas called trials. I began with the French collections, collections consisting of very many small volumes, Lilliputian duodecimos, some of which are so infinitely curious; and having fairly exhausted them, I betook myself to the Brobdignagian folios of "Hargrave's State Trials." What between the size of the books and my own short-sightedness, I well remember that I was compelled to move the reading-desk twice in the course of every double-columned page. Little did I care for that, enchanted as I was by the development, now of story, now of character, now of eloquence, and always of form—the question and answer so well calculated to convey narrative and to elicit truth.

With two or three obvious exceptions, I went through the whole collection, most interested perhaps by those contained in the long reign of Charles II., a time when the prisons, the courts of justice, and the scaffolds were hardly ever free from illustrious victims, martyrs to liberty as in the case of the regicides and of Russell and his companions, or for their ancient faith as in the equally iniquitous condemnations of the so-called Popish Plot.

Amongst these trials of the days of Charles II., two have always seemed to me the perfection of judicial comedy and tragedy.

The former relates to a man about whom much has been written lately; and who certainly, although no doubt he had faults in plenty, was puffed up with vanity as your professors of humanity seldom fail to be, and took no small delight in

courts and princes, as was to be expected from the leader of a sect whose chief tenet was an ostentatious renunciation of the pomps and vanities of the world — must be admitted to have had his merits also—amongst which I shall always include the manner in which he turned the Mayor and Mr. Recorder round his fingers. I am talking of William Penn, and the process in question is the trial of William Penn and William Mead for a tumultuous assembly, 22nd Charles II. (1670), before the Mayor, Recorder, and divers Aldermen, at the Old Bailey.

I do not know any cause pleasanter to read than this, because from first to last the parties with whom our sympathies go have the best not only of the reasoning but of the result ; such arrant blunderers were the whole of the court. To begin at the beginning :—

“ *Clerk*.—Bring William Penn and William Mead to the bar.

“ *Mayor*.—Sirrah ! Who bid you put off their hats ? Put on their hats again.

“ Whereupon one of the officers, putting the prisoners' hats upon their heads, pursuant to the orders of the Court, brought them to the bar.

“ *Recorder*.—Do you know where you are ?

“ *Penn*.—Yes.

“ *Recorder*.—Do you not know it is the King's Court ?

“ *Penn*.—I know it to be a Court, and I suppose it to be the King's Court.

“ *Recorder*.—Do you not know there is a respect due to the Court ?

“ *Penn*.—Yes.

“ *Recorder*.—Why do you not pay it then ?

“ *Penn*.—I do so.

“ *Recorder*.—Why do you not pull off your hat then ?

“ *Penn*.—Because I do not believe that to be any respect.

“ *Recorder*.—Well, the Court sets forty marks apiece upon your heads, as a fine for your contempt of Court.

“ *Penn*.—I desire it might be observed, that we came into the Court with our hats off (that is, taken off), and if they have been put on since, it was by order from the bench, and therefore not we but the bench should be fined.”

Then Penn, finding the advantage he had got, began to ask questions of the Recorder, much to the discomposure of that learned official. Here is a sample :—

“Recorder.—Sir, you are a troublesome fellow, and it is not for the honour of the Court to suffer you to go on.

“Penn.—I have asked but one question, and you have not answered me, though the right and privileges of every Englishman be concerned in it.

“Recorder.—If I should suffer you to ask questions till to-morrow morning, you would be never the wiser.

“Penn.—That is according as the answers be.”

Finally, although the real offence (that of preaching in Gracechurch Street) was, I suppose, pretty clearly established, it was found absolutely impossible to get the jury to convict. They brought in a temporising and modified verdict, which deprived the Court of the few wits with which they seem to have been originally gifted. The Mayor scolded, the Recorder stormed. The jury were locked up, sent back; sent back again, locked up again for something like two days: and must have been made of very stubborn stuff to have resisted the starvation. They did resist, however. The more they were pressed, the more favourable the verdict became, and the bench were at last compelled to accept a complete and triumphant acquittal.

The tragedy relates to a far greater man, to that great patriot, Algernon Sydney, who, in declining years, of feeble health, and never, as he himself asserted, having been present at a trial or read a law-book in his life, yet fought this losing battle so bravely, so manfully, with so much presence of mind, learning, and eloquence, that the pain of reading of such wrongs is almost lost in admiration of the sufferer, and in envy of such a death.

Everybody knows the story of this frightful injustice: that he was convicted upon the hearsay evidence of the infamous Lord Howard and the no less infamous West, contradicted as that evidence was out of their own mouths by a host of honourable witnesses, and only bolstered up by a manuscript book written twenty years before, and left openly upon his writing-table.

Everybody knows, too, his famous answer to Jeffreys at the conclusion of his trial:—

“Lord Chief Justice.—I pray God work in you a temper fit to go into the other world, for I see you are unfit for this.

“Sydney.—My Lord, feel my pulse (holding out his hand),

and see if I am disordered. I bless God I never was in better temper than I am now."

Then the Lieutenant of the Tower carried back his prisoner.

This last act of his life is worthy of an anecdote related by Mr. Brand Hollis of his earlier days:—

"Mr. Sydney, during his stay in France, being one day hunting with the French King, and mounted on a fine English horse, the form and spirit of which caught the King's eye, received a message that he would be pleased to oblige the King with his horse at his own price. He answered that he did not choose to part with him. The King determined to have no denial, and gave orders to tender him money or to seize the horse; which being made known to Mr. Sydney, he instantly took a pistol and shot him, saying: 'That his horse was born a free creature, had served a free man, and should not be mastered by a King of slaves.'"

Besides the cases of high treason, of conspiracy, and of misdemeanor, public crimes, which may be understood as state trials in the strictest sense of the word, and which have all more or less of historical interest, this collection includes a vast variety of remarkable causes—robbery, forgery, murder, offences, against individuals, which have frequently, the more perhaps because they are confined within the limits of private life, the sort of dramatic effect, of incident, and of situation, which belong properly to romance.

Amongst these, I know none more striking, from the near connexion of the principal actors, the strangeness of the scene, the boldness of the crime, and its most providential discovery, than the trial (in 1741) of Samuel Goodere, Captain of H.M.S. *Ruby*, for the murder of his brother, Sir John Dinely Goodere, on board his own man-of-war, brought to light by the cooper's wife, who happened accidentally to be sleeping on board, and by her husband, who had the moral courage to apprehend the assassin in his very cabin.

The fulness and minuteness of the evidence, the gradations by which every thought and plan of the fratricide are laid bare by the different witnesses, the reiteration by which one detail is linked to another, from the first attempt to effect a pretended reconciliation with the destined victim, the hurry-

* 4to Edition (1772) of Algernon Sydney's Works.

ing him from the shore to the boat, the forcing him from the boat to the vessel, and the barring him in the purser's cabin, to the midnight strangulation, produce an impression of truth and reality almost equal to that of having been personally present at the horrid catastrophe.

The very minuteness and repetition, which make so great a part of the charm, forbid any attempt to transcribe the evidence ; but an extract from the opening speech of the counsel will convey better than any words of mine can do the story of this domestic tragedy. One of the subordinate assassins was tried with Captain Goodere, and another afterwards ; and it is singular that the first pair of culprits both laboured under the infirmity of deafness.

“ Gentlemen, as I am instructed, there had been a long and very unhappy difference between the deceased Sir John and his brother, the prisoner, owing to various occasions, and, amongst others, to Sir John's having cut off the entail of a large estate in Worcestershire, to which Mr. Goodere, as the next remainder man, would have otherwise stood entitled, in default of issue of Sir John. Gentlemen, this misunderstanding by degrees grew to an inveterate grudge and hatred on the part of Mr. Goodere ; which was so rooted in his heart, that it at length worked him into a formed design of destroying his brother, and making away with him at all hazards and events. The great difficulty was how to get Sir John into his power, for he generally travelled armed ; nor was it easy to get together a set of fellows so base and desperate as to join with him in the carrying off his brother. But, unfortunately for the deceased, Mr. Goodere, having been recently honoured by His Majesty with the command of the *Ruby* man-of-war, happened, in January last, to be stationed in King's Road—as much within the county of Bristol as this town-hall, where we are sitting. Sir John, who was advanced in years, and very ailing, had, it seems, been advised to come to Bath, for the recovery of his health ; and having occasion to transact affairs of consequence at Bristol with Mr. Josiah Smith, Mr. Goodere took this opportunity of laying a snare for his brother's life, as you will find by the event. He applies to Mr. Smith, and, taking notice to him of the misunderstanding between himself and his brother, pretends a sincere desire of reconciliation, and desires Mr. Smith, if possible, to make up the breach

between them ; and Mr. Smith promised to do his utmost towards effecting a reconciliation, and was as good as his word ; for, by his interest and persuasions, he at length prevailed upon Sir John to see and be reconciled to his brother ; and Sir John having appointed Tuesday, the 13th of January last, in the morning, for calling on Mr. Smith, at his house in College Green, Mr. Smith soon made his brother, Mr. Goodere, acquainted therewith ; and no sooner was he informed of it but he began to take his measures for the executing his wicked schemes against his brother's life : for on Monday (the day before Sir John was to be at Mr. Smith's), Mr. Goodere, with the other prisoner, Mahony (his inseparable agent and companion in every stage of this fatal business), went together to the 'White Hart,' an alehouse, near the foot of the College Green, in view of and almost opposite to Mr. Smith's, in order to see if it was a fit place for their desperate purpose ; and finding it to be so, Mr. Goodere commended the pleasantness of the closet over the porch, and said he would come and breakfast there the next day. And accordingly, the next morning (which was Tuesday, the 13th), Mr. Goodere, with his friend Mahony, and a gang of fellows belonging to the privateer called the *Vernon*, whom they had hired to assist them in the waylaying and seizing of Sir John, came to the 'White Hart ;' when, having ordered they should have what they would call for, he went himself to breakfast in the closet over the porch, from whence he had a full view of Mr. Smith's house ; whilst the others posted themselves below, on the look-out for Sir John : and it was not long before he came, on horseback, to Mr. Smith's ; but his stay was very short, being obliged to go to Bath : however, he promised Mr. Smith to be in Bristol again by the Saturday following. He was seen from the 'White Hart' by Mr. Goodere and his spies upon the watch ; but having a servant, and riding with pistols, they did not think proper to attempt the seizing of him then ; but as he rode down the hill, by St. Augustine's Back, Mr. Goodere called out to Mahony, in these words : 'Look to him well, Mahony, and watch him ; but don't touch him now.' And, in fact, gentlemen, the prisoners and their companions followed and watched Sir John a considerable way. Afterwards, Mr. Smith acquainted the prisoner Goodere, that his brother was to be with him on the Sunday following ; and, little thinking

that an interview betwixt brothers could be of fatal tendency, advised him to be in the way, that he might bring them together: which advice the prisoner observed with but too great punctuality; taking care, in the interim, to lay such a train, that it should be hardly possible for his brother to escape falling into his hands. He ordered the man-of-war's barge to be sent up for him on the Sunday: accordingly, it came up between two and three that afternoon; of which Mr. Goodere being informed by one Williams, a midshipman, whom he had ordered up in it, he inquired of Williams if he knew the river, and the brick-kilns going down it? And Williams telling him he did, Mr. Goodere ordered him to get all the boat's crew together, and be sure to place the barge at the brick-kilns, and leave but two or three hands to look after the barge, and bring all the rest of the men to the 'White Hart' alehouse, and wait for him there. Accordingly, gentlemen, Williams and most of the bargemen came to the place of rendezvous at the 'White Hart,' where Mahony, with several of the privateer's men (I believe all or part of the same gang that had been there on the watch the Tuesday before), were also met, by Mr. Goodere's orders, to waylay and seize Sir John; and stood at the window, on the look-out, in order to watch his coming out of Mr. Smith's. Thus the ambuscade being laid, the prisoner, Mr. Goodere, goes to Mr. Smith's, about three in the afternoon, the hour at which Sir John had appointed to be there. He went directly towards his brother, Sir John, and kissed him (what kind of kiss it was, will best appear in the sequel), and observed to him, with an outward show of satisfaction, that he looked in better health than he had formerly done. Mr. Smith was so good as to drink friendship and reconciliation between the two brothers. Mr. Goodere pledged it in a glass of wine, which he drank to his brother, Sir John; who, being under a regimen, offered to pledge him in water, little thinking his brother designed to end their differences by putting an end to his life. But that, gentlemen, you'll soon see, was the sole end he had in view; for Sir John, in about half an hour, taking his leave, Mr. Goodere was following him. Mr. Smith stopped Mr. Goodere, saying, 'I think I have done great things for you.' Says Mr. Goodere, 'By heaven! this won't do;' and immediately followed his brother: and meeting some of the sailors

he had posted at the 'White Hart,' says to them, 'Is he ready?' and being answered 'Yes,' he bade them make haste. Mahony and the other fellows, who were on the look-out at the 'White Hart,' seeing Sir John go down St. Augustine's Back, immediately rushed out, and (as they had been ordered by Mr. Goodere) seized Sir John as their prisoner. Just then, Mr. Goodere himself was come up, and had joined his companions, and showed himself their ringleader; for, according to my instructions, he gave them positive orders to carry Sir John on board the barge; and they but too exactly obeyed the word of command. They hurried on Sir John with the utmost violence and precipitation, forcing him along, and even striking him in the presence of his brother; and, as the Romans used to do their malefactors, dragged him through the public way. The poor unfortunate creature made repeated outcries of 'Murder!'—that he was ruined and undone; for his brother was going to take away his life. He made what resistance he could—called aloud for help; but all was to no purpose. Several persons, indeed, followed them, and asked what was the matter? But they were answered by Mr. Goodere and his associates, that the person they were hauling along was a murderer—had killed a man, and was going to be tried for his life. The most of this ruffianly crew being armed with bludgeons and truncheons, obliged the people who came about to keep off, holding up their sticks at them, and threatening to knock them down. Gentlemen, when they had thus forced Sir John towards the end of the rope-walk, Mr. Goodere (who all along bore them company, and animated them as they passed along) bade them make more dispatch, and mend their pace. Accordingly, they took up Sir John, and carried him by main force a considerable way; then let him down again, and pushed and hauled him along, until they had got near to the slip opposite the 'King's Head.' Sir John cried out, 'Save me! save me! for they are going to murder me!' There the barge came up; and the prisoner, Mr. Goodere, had his brother forced into the barge, and, with Mahony and the rest, went also into the barge. Sir John then called out, 'For God's sake, run to Mr. Smith, and tell him I am about to be murdered, or I am an undone man!' And crying out that his name was Dinely, Mr. Goodere stopped his mouth with his hand, to prevent his telling his other name. And though Sir

John was in an ill state of health, yet his hard-hearted brother forcibly took his cloak from off his back, and put it on himself. And having thus got him into his power, he ordered the men to row off ; telling his brother, that now he had got him into his custody, he would take care of him, and prevent his making away with his estate. But, gentlemen, in fact, so little did he think himself concerned with what Sir John did with the estate, that he was of opinion no act of Sir John's could affect it longer than his own life, and that it must necessarily devolve to him, as the next in remainder, on his brother's dying without issue. And this, gentlemen, he declared to Mr. Smith but a few days before ; and, indeed, his brother at once saw what kind of prevention it was he meant, 'I know,' says he to Mr. Goodere, soon after his being forced into the barge, 'you intend to murder me this night ; and therefore you may as well do it now as carry me down.' Poor gentleman ! his heart misgave him, that the design of this base and daring outrage was to make the ship his prison, one of the cabins his slaughter-house, and the sea his grave ; and therefore he made it his choice to be thrown overboard in the river (where his body might be found), rather than buried in the ocean. The prisoner Goodere denied, indeed, he had any such design, but yet could not refrain from the usual exhortation to dying persons, that he would have him make his peace with God. At the Redcliff, the privateer's men were set on shore ; and, I think, about seven in the evening, the barge reached the *Ruby* man-of-war, then in the King's Road. Mr. Goodere had in their passage talked of bleeding and purging his brother, to bring him to his senses, pretending he was a madman ; for he knew very well that very few of his own men would have assisted him in such an enterprise, had they not been under a belief that his brother was really mad. And to keep up such a notion, as soon as he had got him on board the *Ruby*, he hurried him down what I think they call the gangway, into the purser's cabin ; making an apology that he had brought in a mad fellow there ; then ordered two bolts to be clapped on the cabin-door, for the making his prison more secure, which was accordingly done. And now, having made his brother a prisoner, his next step was to destroy him. He took Mahony with him into his own cabin, and there the cruel means of murdering his brother

was concerted between them. They agreed to strangle him, and engaged one White (who is hereafter to stand to the justice of his country) to assist them in the butchery. I should have told you, gentlemen, that it is usual in ships of war to place a sentinel over persons under arrest; and accordingly one was placed by Mr. Goodere's orders, with a drawn cutlass in his hand, at the door of the cabin where Sir John was confined. This sentinel, about twelve at night, was relieved by one Buchanan. It was impossible for the prisoners to put their wicked design in execution while this Buchanan remained at the cabin-door; so, to remove that obstacle, Mr. Goodere (after having been in close conference with Mahony and White) comes down to the purser's cabin, takes the cutlass from Buchanan, and orders him on deck, posting himself at the door of the purser's cabin, with the drawn cutlass in his hand. I shall open none of the circumstances disclosed by Mahony in his confession, as being no evidence against Mr. Goodere: but it will be made appear to you, in proof that Mahony and White came to the purser's cabin while Mr. Goodere stood posted at the door of it, that they were let into the purser's cabin by Mr. Goodere himself. Mahony, in particular, was seen by one Macguiness (who kept watch in the gun-room) to go into the purser's cabin, Mr. Goodere at the same time standing sentinel at the door of it, and waving his cutlass at Macguiness, to make him go back. He did so; but Mr. Goodere waved his cutlass to him a second time, and bade him keep back. Then, gentlemen, it was that Mr. Goodere and his two accomplices effected the cruel murder of his unfortunate brother. Mahony was heard to bid him not stir for his life; and then, in conjunction with White, whilst Mr. Goodere stood watch for them at the cabin-door (which Mr. Recorder will tell you was the same as being within it), fell on this unhappy gentleman, as he lay in the cabin; and one of them having half throttled him with his hands, they put a rope about his neck, and at length strangled him. Great were his agonies, and long and painful the conflict between life and death. He struggled violently, and kicked against the cabin, crying out several times very loud, 'Murder! Must I die? Help, for God's sake; save my life! Here are twenty guineas—take them.' For he well knew they were strangling him by his brother's orders, and therefore offered them a bribe

to spare his life. The ship's cooper (one Jones) and his wife, lying in the adjoining cabin, heard his dying outcries, and the noise occasioned by his kicking: his cries, too, were heard by others far beyond the cabin-door. Nature at length gave way, and he expired under these cruelties. Then Mahony called for a light, that they might have all the evidence of their eyesight that Sir John was actually dead; and (which is a shocking circumstance in the case) Mr. Goodere himself handed them in the candle upon that occasion. Buchanan, perceiving the light disappear, was coming to him with another; but Mr. Goodere waved the cutlass at him to stand off. Such, gentlemen, was the fatal conclusion of this tragical business. What was seen by the cooper and his wife, after the candle was handed in, with regard to rifling the deceased, shall come from their own mouths. The murder being thus effected, Mr. Goodere locked the door, and withdrew to his own cabin. Mahony and White were, by his order, put aboard the yawl, and sent to Bristol. They did not fly the city, gentlemen, depending that their fellow-murderer would some way or other smother this deed of darkness, and take care of their security for the sake of his own. But Divine Providence ordered otherwise. The honest cooper, though he durst not give the alarm whilst the murder was committing, for fear of sharing the same fate with Sir John, yet, as soon as he could with safety, made a discovery of the whole that he had heard and seen. It was concluded that Mr. Goodere had made away with his brother; which too evidently appeared, on the cooper's forcing open the purser's cabin-door, where Sir John lay murdered; and thereupon the cooper had the resolution to seize the murderer (who remained on board), though his Captain. He pretended innocence; and when brought by warrant before Mr. Mayor, and other of the city magistrates, publicly declared that he did not then know that his brother was murdered; and went so far as to deny his having had any hand in either the seizing, detaining, or murdering him. But, gentlemen, if my instructions don't mislead me, we shall fix the thing at least as strongly upon Mr. Goodere as Mahony, and more strongly upon them both than I am willing to open it."

Then came a cloud of witnesses; Mr. Smith, the landlord of the "White Hart;" a variety of bystanders; the men of the barge, one of whom, the Midshipman Williams, deposes to the

exhortation given by Captain Goodere to his brother, to make his peace with God :—

“ *Williams*.—And the Captain being as near to Sir John as I am to your Lordship, Sir John asked the Captain what he was going to do with him ? Says the Captain : ‘ I am going to carry you on board, to save you from ruin, and from lying rotting in a gaol.’ ”

“ *Mr. Vernon (counsel for the prosecution)*.—And what reply did Sir John make to that ?

“ *Williams*.—He said : ‘ I know better things. I believe you are going to murder me. You might as well throw me over-board, and murder me here right, as carry me on board ship and murder me.’ ‘ No,’ says the Captain, ‘ I am not going to do any such thing ; but I would have you make your peace with God.’ As I steered the boat I heard all that passed.”

Then came witnesses to the bringing on board and into the purser’s cabin, and the fastening on the bolts, and the placing a sentinel at the door, and the replacing that sentinel by Captain Goodere himself ; and then comes the chief witness of all, the “ honest cooper.”

Edward Jones sworn :

“ *Mr. Vernon*.—Mr. Jones, I think you are the cooper of the ship ‘ Ruby ? ’

“ *Jones*.—Yes, Sir.

“ *Mr. Vernon*.—Were you on board on Sunday, the 18th of January last ?

“ *Jones*.—Yes, Sir ; I was.

“ *Mr. Vernon*.—In what cabin did you lie that night ?

“ *Jones*.—I had no cabin ; but I made bold to lie in the slop-room that night, having my wife on board.

“ *Mr. Vernon*.—Pray what is that you call the slop-room.

“ *Jones*—It is like a cabin.

“ *Mr. Vernon*.—How near is the slop-room to the purser’s cabin ?

“ *Jones*.—Nothing but a thin deal partition parts it from the purser’s cabin.

“ *Mr. Vernon*.—Will you relate to Mr. Recorder and the jury what you know about the murder of Mr. Goodere’s brother. Tell the whole you know concerning it.

“ *Jones*.—About Wednesday or Thursday before this happened, the Captain said to me, ‘ Cooper, get this purser’s cabin

cleared out ;' for he said he expected a gentleman shortly to come on board. I cleared it out, and on Sunday evening the gentleman came on board. When the people on deck cried, 'Cooper, show a light,' I brought a light, and saw the Captain going down the cock-pit ladder. The gentleman was hauled down ; he complained of a pain in his thigh from their hauling him on board. The Captain asked him if he would have a dram. He said No, for he had drunk nothing but water for two years. The Captain ordered Mahony a dram. He drank it. He also ordered one Jack Lee to put two bolts on the purser's cabin-door. The gentleman walked to and fro the purser's cabin, whilst they were nailing the bolts on. He wanted to speak with one of the officers. The carpenter told him he was the carpenter. Says the gentleman : ' Do you understand what my brother Sam is going to do with me ?' And said his brother had brought him on board to murder him that night. The carpenter said he hoped not, but what was done was for his good. The Captain said, they must not mind what his brother said, for he had been mad for a twelve-month past ; then the Captain went up again, and went into the doctor's room. I went to bed about eight o'clock. Some time about eleven o'clock at night, I heard the gentleman knock. Mahony went into him. Mahony sat down in the cabin, and he and the gentleman had a great deal of discourse together : the gentleman said he had been at the East Indies, and told what he had got by his merit, and Mahony said some by good friends. I heard the gentleman, after Mahony had gone, pray to God to be his comforter under his afflictions : he said to himself that he knew he was going to be murdered, and prayed that it might come to light by one means or another. I took no notice of it, because I thought him a crazy man. I slept a little, and about two or three o'clock, my wife waked me. She said : 'Don't you hear the noise that is made by the gentleman ; I believe they are killing him.' I then heard him kick, and cry out, 'Here are twenty guineas ! Take them ! Don't murder me ! Must I die ! Must I die ! O my life !' and gave several keeks with his throat, and then he was still. I got up in my bed upon my knees ; I saw a light glimmering in at the crack, and saw that same man Mahony with a candle in his hand. The gentleman was lying on one side. Charles White was there, and he put out his hand to get the gentle-

man upright. I heard Mahony cry out, and swear, 'Let us take his watch !' But White said he could not get at it. I could not see his pockets. White laid hold of him, and went to tumbling him up to get out his money and watch. I saw him lay hold of the chain. White gave Mahony the watch, who put it in his pocket, and White put his hand into one of the gentleman's pockets, and cursed that there was nothing but silver, but he put his hand into the other pocket, and there he found gold.

"*Mr. Recorder.*—In what posture did Sir John lie at that time ?

"*Jones.*—He lay in a very uneasy manner, with one leg up, and when they moved him, he remained so ; which gave me a suspicion that he was dead. *I saw a person's hand on the throat of this gentleman, and heard the person say, 'Tis done, and well done.'*

"*Mr. Recorder.*—Was that a third person's hand, or the hand of Mahony or White ?

"*Jones.*—I cannot say whether it was a third person's hand or not. I saw but two persons in the cabin. I did not see the person, for it was done in a moment. I can't swear I saw more than two persons in the cabin.

"*Mr. Recorder.*—Did you take notice of the hand that was laid on Sir John's throat ?

"*Jones.*—I did.

"*Mr. Recorder.*—Did it appear to you like the hand of a common sailor ?

"*Jones.*—No ; it seemed white.

"*Mr. Vernon.*—You have seen two hands held up at the bar to-day. I would ask you to which of them it was most like in colour ?

"*Jones.*—I have often seen Mahony's and White's hands, and I thought the hand was whiter than either of theirs ; and I think it was neither of their hands by the colour of it.

"*Mr. Recorder.*—Was Sir John on the floor, or on the bed ?

"*Jones.*—On the bed ; but there was no sheets. It was a flock bed, and nobody had lain there for a great while.

"*Mr. Vernon.*—How long did the cries and noise that you heard continue ?

"*Jones.*—Not a great while. He cried like a person going out of the world, very low. At my hearing it, I would have

got out in the meantime, but my wife desired me not to go, for she was afraid there was somebody at the door would have killed me.

"*Mr. Vernon.*—What more do you know of this matter ? or of Mahony and White being afterwards put on shore ?

"*Jones.*—I heard some talking that the yawl was to go to the shore about four of the clock in the morning, and some of us were called up, and I importuned my wife to let me go out. I called and asked, 'Who is sentinel ?' Duncan Buchanan answered and said, 'It is I.' 'Oh !' says I, 'is it you ?' I then thought myself safe. I jumped out in my shirt, went to him : says I, 'There have been a devilish noise in the cabin, Duncan ; do you know anything of the matter ? They have certainly killed the gentleman. What shall us do ?' I went to the cabin-door, where the doctor's mate lodged, asked him if he 'had heard anything to-night ?' 'I heard a great noise,' said he. 'I believe,' said I, 'they have killed that gentleman.' He said he 'believed so, too.' I drawed aside the scuttle that looked into the purser's cabin from the steward's room, and cried, 'Sir, if you are alive, speak.' He did not speak. I took a long stick, and endeavoured to move him, but found he was dead. I told the doctor's mate that I thought he was the proper person to relate the matter to the officer, but he did not care to do it then. 'If you will not, I will,' said I. I went up to the Lieutenant, and desired him to come out of his cabin to me. 'What is the matter ?' said he. I told him, 'I believed there had been murder committed in the cockpit, upon the gentleman who was brought on board last night.' 'Oh ! don't say so,' said the Lieutenant. In that interim, whilst we were talking about it, Mr. Marsh, the midshipman, came and said that there was an order to carry White and Mahony on shore. I then swore they should not go on shore, for there was murder committed. The Lieutenant said, 'Pray, be easy ; it can't be so. I don't believe the Captain would do any such thing.' That gentleman there, Mr. Marsh, went to ask the Captain if Mahony and White must be put on shore ? And Mr. Marsh returned again, and said the Captain said they should. I then said, 'It is certainly true that the gentleman is murdered between them.' I did not see Mahony and White that morning, because they were put on shore. I told the Lieutenant, that if he would not take

care of the matter, I would write up to the Admiralty, and to the Mayor of Bristol. The Lieutenant asked the Captain to drink a glass of wine. The Captain would not come out of his cabin. Then the Lieutenant went in first. I followed him. Then I seized him, and several others came to my assistance."

The cooper's good wife, Margaret Jones, corroborated her husband's evidence in every point with equal clearness and directness. Witness after witness followed with terrible repetition, and a distinctness, a power of simple, honest truth, that nothing could shake. The very watch and money for which they had wrangled over the dead body were brought home to the subordinate ruffians, and the whole three were found guilty, condemned, and executed as near as possible to the scene of the crime.

This remarkable murder took place rather more than a hundred years ago. The two brothers were uncles of Samuel Foote, the celebrated mimic and comedian, and admirable farce writer, whose baptismal name was probably derived from that disgrace to the British Navy, Captain Samuel Goodere.

XXVIII.

FISHING SONGS.

RECOLLECTIONS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

MR. DOUBLEDAY—MISS CORBETT.

ALL the world, that is to say, the reading world, whether male or female, has yielded to the magic of one Fisherman's book—"The English Angler," of Isaac Walton; and such is the charm of the subject, that the modern works which, so far as the science of angling is concerned, may be said to have superseded the instructions of the old master, the works of Sir Humphry Davy, of Mr. Hofland, of Mr. Henry Phillips all men eminent for other triumphs than those of the fishing-rod, have, in their several ways, inherited much of the fascination that belongs to the venerable father of the piscatory art.

Even the dissertations on salmon-fishing, as practised in the wilder parts of Ireland and in Norway, which when measured with the humble sport of angling for trout in a southern

stream, may be likened to the difference between a grand lion hunt in Africa and the simple pheasant shooting of a Norfolk squire—even the history of landing a salmon partakes of the Waltonian charm. We take up the book, and we forget to lay it down again ; the greatest compliment that reader can pay to author.

The poetical brothers of the angle, however—I mean such as have actually written in verse—are not only fewer in number, but have generally belonged to the northern portion of our island. I am not sure that the pleasure with which I read “The Fisher’s Welcome,” may not partly be referred to that cause. At least, I do not like Mr. Doubleday’s genial song the less for the reminiscences of canny Northumberland with which every stanza teems.

Years, many and changeful, have gone by since I trod those northern braes ; they at whose side I stood, lie under the green sod ; yet still, as I read of the Tyne or of the Wansbeck, the bright rivers sparkle before me, as if I had walked beside them but yesterday. I still seem to stand with my dear father under the grey walls of that grand old abbey church at Hexham, gazing upon the broad river as it sweeps in a majestic semicircle before us, amid, perhaps, the very fairest scenery of that fair valley of the Tyne, so renowned for varied beauty, whilst he points to the haunts of his boyhood, especially the distant woods of Dilstone Hall, the forfeited estate of Lord Derwentwater. I still seem to listen, as he tells how, in the desolate orchard, he had often gathered fruit almost returned to the wildness of the forest ; and how, among the simple peasantry, the recollection of the unhappy Earl, so beloved and so lamented, had lingered for half a century ; and tales were yet told how, after his execution, his mangled remains were brought secretly by night to be interred in the vault of his ancestors, halting mysteriously in private houses by day, and resuming their melancholy journey during the dark hours ; the secret known to so many, and yet kept so faithfully and so loyally, handed down from father to son, and spoken in low-whispered words as a solemn confidence to be religiously held sacred ! a duty to the ruined and the dead ! Thirty or forty years more had passed, yet I myself heard the country people speak with tender pity of that cherished lord.

Or the Wansbeck, more familiar still ! How plainly do I

see that wild, daring stream!—now almost girdling, as a moat the massive ruins of Mitford Castle,*—in the time of the Conqueror, it is to be presumed, the common ancestral home of our race and name, so widely scattered since;—now brawling through the deep glen behind the old tower of Little-Harle;—now almost invisible, creeping under the single arch that spans the richly-fringed burn by the pretty rectory of Hartburn;—now reflecting the autumn woods of Bothal and the grey walls of the Lady's Chapel!

Proteus of streams! Here a foaming torrent between rocks no wider than a deer may leap at a bound!—there a spreading lakelet, too shallow for a bridge, crossed by huge stepping-stones, on which my southern feet tottered and stumbled, and all but fell!

How well I remember my girlish terror when called upon to pass from one stepping-stone to another, and the girlish bravado with which, wanting courage to turn back, and laughing, half to cover my trepidation, and half from genuine fright, I confronted the danger and performed the exploit! Ah! I am not the first who has done a bold thing in fear and trembling, as (if such truths were ever told) many a soldier on his first field could bear witness. At last, encouraged by the applause of friends and relatives, I even came to like the stepping-stones, the excitement, and the praise; just as, cheered by similar bribery, the soldier learns to love a great battle-day.

Those stepping-stones at Mitford! I can see them now. I had heard of them before I saw them, and of their perils. A lady's-maid of my acquaintance, London-born and London-bred—one of those dainty waiting gentlewomen for whose behoof Congreve, in the most graceful as well as the wittiest of his comedies, invented the name of Mrs. Mincing—had been seduced into venturing across them, handed and supported by a French valet. She had fallen, of course, and had dragged her unlucky escort after her; and her description of her previous alarm, the agonies she underwent before her dip,

* An old kinsman, my father's uncle, who lived almost within sight of the Castle Mound, used to derive the name Mid-ford, from the situation of the keep between two fords of the Wansbeck. So convinced was he of the truth of his theory, that, contrary to the practice of all the rest of the family, he pertinaciously adopted that mode of orthography in writing his patronymic.

and the terrors of the catastrophe ; how she lost a kid slipper and spoilt a silk skirt, and was laughed at by the north-country savages into the bargain ; was enough to frighten all the silk skirts and kid slippers within fifty miles, to say nothing of the Mrs. Mincings, or of me.

Bright river Wansbeck ! How many pleasant memories I owe to thy mere name ! It were but common courtesy to wish a brimming basket and a smiling welcome home to the kindly songster who casts his line across thy waters.

THE FISHER'S WELCOME.

We twa ha' fished the Kale sae clear,
 And streams o' mossy Reed ;
 We've tried the Wansbeck and the Wear,
 The Teviot and the Tweed ;
 An' we will try them ance again,
 When summer suns are fine ;
 An' we'll throw the flies thegither yet,
 For the days o' lang syne.

'T is mony years sin' first we sat
 On Coquet's bonny braes,
 An' mony a brither fisher's gane,
 An' clad in his last claihds ;
 An' we maun follow wi' the lave,
 Grim Death he heucks us a' ;
 But we'll hae anither fishing bout
 Afore we're ta'en awa'.

For we are hale and hearty baith,
 Tho' frosty are our pows,
 We still can guide our fishing graith,
 And climb the dykes and knowes ;
 We'll mount our creels and grip our gads,
 An' throw a sweeping line,
 An' we'll hae a splash amang the lads,
 For the days o' lang syne.

Tho' Cheviot's top be frosty still,
 He's green below the knee,
 Sae don your plaid, and tak your gad,
 An' gae awa' wi' me.
 Come, busk your flies, my old compeer,
 We're fidgen a' fu' fain,
 We've fished the Coquet mony a year,
 An' we'll fish her ance again.

An' hameward when we toddle back,
 An' nicht begins to fa',
 An' ilk a chiel maun hae his crack,
 We'll crack aboon them a'.

When jugs are toomed and coggens wet,
 I 'll lay my loof in thine ;
 We 've shown we 're gude at water yet,
 An' we 're little warse at wine.
 We 'll crack how mony a creel we 've filled,
 How mony a line we 've flung,
 How mony a ged and saumon killed,
 In days when we were young.
 We 'll gar the callants a' look blue,
 An' sing anither tune ;
 They 're bleezing aye o' what they 'll do,
 We 'll tell them what we 've dune.

The next song is of the sea :—

Weel may the boatie row,
 An' better may she speed ;
 An' weel may the boatie row,
 That wins the bairnie's bread !
 The boatie rows, the boatie rows,
 The boatie rows indeed ;
 An' happy be the lot of a'
 That wishes her to speed !
 I cuist my line in Largo Bay,
 An' fishes I caught nine ;
 There 's three to boil, and three to fry,
 An' three to bait the line.
 The boatie rows, the boatie rows,
 The boatie rows indeed ;
 An' happy be the lot of a'
 That wishes her to speed !
 O weel may the boatie row
 That fills a heavy creel,
 An' cleads us a' frae head to feet,
 An' buys our parritch meal.
 The boatie rows, the boatie rows,
 The boatie rows indeed ;
 An' happy be the lot of a'
 That wishes her to speed !
 When Jamie vowed he wad be mine
 An' won frae me my heart,
 Oh muckle lighter grew my creel,
 He swore we 'd never part.
 The boatie rows, the boatie rows,
 The boatie rows fu' weel ;
 An' muckle lighter is the lade,
 When luve bears up the creel.
 My curch I pit upon my heid,
 And dressed mysel fu' braw ;
 I trow my heart was dowf an' wae
 When Jamie gaed awa'.

But weel may the boatie row,
 An' lucky be her part,
 An' lightsome be the lassie's care
 That yields an honest heart.

When Sawney, Jock, and Jeanetie
 Are up and gotten lear,
 They'll help to gar the boatie row,
 An' lighten a' our care.
 The boatie rows, the boatie rows,
 The boatie rows fu' weel !
 An' lightsome be her heart that bears
 The murlain and the creel.

An' when wi' age we are worn down,
 An' hirpling round the door,
 They'll row to keep us hale and warm,
 As we did them before,
 Then weel may the boatie row
 That wins the bairnie's bread ;
 An' happy be the lot of a'
 That wish the boat to speed !

Again a song of the net and of the fishing-boat, and surely one of no ordinary merit. Miss Corbett is the authoress. We may well be proud of a poetess whose song is as bold and free as the breeze of which she sings :—

WE'LL GO TO SEA NO MORE.

Oh ! blythely shines the bonnie sun
 Upon the Isle of May,
 And blythely comes the morning tide
 Into St. Andrew's Bay,
 Then up, gudeman, the breeze is fair ;
 And up my bra' bairns three,
 There's goud in yonder bonnie boat
 That sails sae weel the sea !
 When haddock leaves the Frith o' Forth,
 An' mussels leave the shore,
 When oysters climb up Berwick Law,
 We'll go to sea no more,
 No more,
 We'll go to sea no more.

I've seen the waves as blue as air,
 I've seen them green as grass ;
 But I never feared their heaving yet
 From Grangemouth to the Bass.

I've seen the sea as black as pitch,
 I've seen it white as snow;
 But I never feared its foaming yet,
 Though the winds blew high or low.
 When squalls capsize our wooden walls,
 When the French ride at the Nore,
 When Leith meets Aberdour half way,
 We'll go to sea no more,
 No more,
 We'll go to sea no more.

I never liked the landsman's life,
 The earth is aye the same;
 Gi'e me the ocean for my dower,
 My vessel for my hame.
 Gi'e me fields that no man ploughs,
 The farm that pays no fee;
 Gi'e me the bonny fish, that glance
 So gladly through the sea.
 When sails hang flapping on the masts,
 While through the wave we snore;
 When in a calm we're tempest-tost,
 We'll go to sea no more,
 No more,
 We'll go to sea no more.

The sun is up, and round Inchkeith
 The breezes softly blaw;
 The gudeman has the lines on board;—
 Awa', my bairns, awa'.
 An' ye be back by gloamin' grey,
 An' bright the fire will low,
 An' in your tales and sangs we'll tell
 How weel the boat ye row.
 When life's last sun gaes feebly down,
 An' Death comes to our door,
 When a' the world's a dream to us,
 We'll go to sea no more,
 No more,
 We'll go to sea no more.

Gi'e me the fields that no man ploughs,
 The farm that pays no fee.

What two lines are these! The whole song seems set to the music of the winds and waves, so free and unshackled is the rhythm, and so hearty and seaman-like the sentiment. To speak all praise in one word, it might have been written by Joanna Baillie.

Although not strictly a Fishing Song, yet as one purporting to be sung by a mariner's wife, I cannot resist the temptation

of adding the charming ballad that concludes this paper. Mr. Robert Chambers attributes the authorship to William Julius Mickle, the translator of the "Lusiad," and the writer of "Cumnor Hall," to which, and the impression made upon Sir Walter Scott, in early life, by the first stanza,* the world is probably indebted for Kenilworth. Mr. Chambers says that of this ballad, an imperfect, altered, and corrected copy was found among his manuscripts after his death ; and his widow, being applied to, confirmed the external evidence in his favour, by an express declaration that her husband had said the song was his own, and that he had explained to her the Scottish words.

And are ye sure the news is true ?
 And are ye sure he 's weel ?
 Is this a time to think o ' wark ?
 Ye jades, fling by your wheel.
 Is this a time to think o ' wark,
 When Colin 's at the door ?
 Gie ' me my cloak,—I 'll to the quay,
 And see him come ashore.
 For there 's nae luck about the house,
 There 's nae luck ava' ;
 There 's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman 's awa'.

And gie me down my biggonet,
 My bishop-satin gown,
 And rin and tell the bailie 's wife
 That Colin 's come to town.
 My Sunday shoon they maun gae on,
 My hose o ' pearlín blue ;
 It 's a ' to please my ain gudeman,
 For he 's baith leal and true.
 For there 's nae luck about the house,
 There 's nae luck ava' ;
 There 's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman 's awa'.

Rise up and mak ' a clean fireside,
 Put on the muckle pot ;
 Gi'e little Kate her cotton gown,
 And Jock his Sunday coat.

* "The dews of summer night did fall,
 The moon, sweet regent of the sky,
 Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall,
 And many an oak that grew thereby.

And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
 Their hose as white as snaw ;—
 It's a' to please my ain gudeman—
 He likes to see them braw.
 For there's nae luck about the house,
 There's nae luck ava' ;
 There's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman's awa'.

There's twa fat hens upon the bouk
 They've fed this month and mair ;
 Mak' haste and thraw their necks about
 That Colin weel may fare.
 And spread the table neat and clean,
 Gar ilk a thing look braw ;—
 For wha can tell how Colin fared
 When he was far awa' !
 For there's nae luck about the house,
 There's nae luck ava' ;
 There's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman's awa'.

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
 His breath's like caller air ;
 His very foot has music in 't,
 As he comes up the stair.
 And will I see his face again ?
 And will I hear him speak ?
 I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,—
 In troth I'm like to greet.
 For there's nae luck about the house,
 There's nae luck ava' ;
 There's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman's awa'.

The cauld blasts o' the winter's wind,
 That thirled through my heart,
 They're a' blawn by, I hae him safe,
 Till death we'll never part.
 But what puts parting i' my heid ?
 It may be far awa' ;
 The present moment is our own,
 The neist we never saw.
 For there's nae luck about the house,
 There's nae luck ava' ;
 There's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman's awa'.

Since Colin's weel, I'm weel content,
 I hae nae mair to crave ;
 Could I but live to mak' him blest,
 I'm blest aboon the lave :

And will I see his face again ?
 And will I hear him speak ?
 I 'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,—
 In troth I 'm like to greet.
 For there 's nae luck about the house,
 There 's nae luck ava' ;
 There 's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman 's awa.'

Mr. Chambers may well call this song "the fairest flower in Mickle's poetical chaplet." Many a laureled bard might have proudly owned such a ballad.

P.S. I was reading this song to a friend, as well as a tongue not Scottish would let me, while an intelligent young person, below the rank that is called a lady, sate at work in the room. She smiled as I concluded, and said, half to herself, "Singing that song got my sister a husband!"

"Is she so fine a singer?" inquired my friend.

"No, Ma'am, not a fine singer at all ; only somehow everybody likes to hear her, because she seems to feel the words she sings, and so makes other people feel them. But it was her choosing that song that won William's love. He said that a woman who put so much heart into the description of a wife's joy at getting her husband home again, would be sure to make a good wife herself. And so she does. There never was a happier couple. It has been a lucky song for them, I am sure."

Now it seems to me that this true story is worth all the criticisms in the world, both on this particular ballad, and on the manner of singing ballads in general. Let the poet and his songstress only put heart into them, and the lady, at least, sees her reward.

XXIX.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

RESIDENCE AT LYME—STORY OF A LOTTERY-TICKET.

JOHN KENYON.

IN one of Mr. Kenyon's charming volumes, there is a slight and graceful poem, addressed to Mary Anning, of Lyme Regis, the first discoverer of the Saurian remains for which that

picturesque coast is now so famous, which has for me an interest quite distinct from literature or geology. In that old historical town, so deeply interwoven with the tragedy of Monmouth and the triumph of William III., that old town so finely placed on the very line where Dorsetshire and Devonshire meet, I spent the eventful year when the careless happiness of childhood vanished, and the troubles of the world first dimly dawned upon my heart—felt in its effects rather than known—felt in its chilling gloom, as we feel the shadow of a cloud that passes over the sun on an April day.

My dear mother, the only surviving child of a richly beneficed clergyman, had been for her station and for those times what might be called an heiress, and when she married my father, brought him, besides certain property in house and land, a portion in money of eight-and-twenty thousand pounds. He himself, the younger son of an old family, with a medical education as good as the world could afford, a graduate of Edinburgh, a house pupil of John Hunter, and personally all that attracts the sex—clever, handsome, young and gay, had won her heart almost without design when he came to settle to his profession in the little Hampshire town where after the death of both parents she had taken up her abode, and was easily persuaded by friends more wordly wise than he to address himself to a lady who, although ten years his senior, had every recommendation that heart could desire—except beauty. So they married. She, full of confiding love, refused every settlement beyond two hundred a-year pin-money, out of his own property, on which he insisted ; and he justified her choice by invariable kindness and affection, an affection that knew no intermission from her wedding-day to the day of her death, and by every manly and generous quality excepting that which is so necessary to stability and comfort in this work-a-day world—the homely quality called prudence. Independent to a fault, frank in speech and rash in act, a zealous and uncompromising Whig, in those days when Whiggery was sometimes called sedition and sometimes treason, he first ruined his fair professional prospects in a place where he was known and loved, by plunging into the fervent hatreds of a hotly contested county election ; and then, when he had removed into Berkshire, contrived by some similar outbreak to affront and alienate a rich cousin, of whom my mother was

Autograph

the declared heir, and who, after being violently angry with her for marrying, and with me for being a girl, had been propitiated by my bearing the magic name of Russell ; and might perhaps have again relented had he not died within a few months, just after leaving his money to a child whom he had never seen, who had not even the baptismal Russell to recommend him. Then in his new residence he got into some feud with that influential body the corporation : and whether impatient of professional restraints, or of the slow progress of a physician's fortunes, he attempted to increase his own resources by the aid of cards (he was unluckily one of the finest whist-players in England), or by that other terrible gambling, which assumes so many forms, and bears so many names, but which even when called by its milder term of *speculation*, is that terrible thing gambling still ; whatever might be the manner of the loss—or whether, as afterwards happened, his own large-hearted hospitality and too-confiding temper were alone to blame—for the detail was never known to me, nor do I think it was known to my mother ; he did not tell, and we could not ask—whatever the actual cause, it seems to me certain that about this time nearly all of his own paternal property, except the reserved pin-money, and much of my mother's fortune, was in some way sunk.

Under these circumstances, just as a remarkable cure was beginning to make his medical talent advantageously known, he resolved to remove to Lyme, feeling with characteristic sanguineness that in a fresh place success would be certain. How often, in after-life, has that sanguine spirit, which clung to him to his last hour, made me tremble and shiver. I had seen him so often disappointed, that it seemed to me that what he expected could never come to pass ; and, such, I think, is the natural effect produced on all around by an over-sanguine spirit. Even Hope has never been so truly characterized as by the great poet in his fine personification. “*Fear and trembling Hope* ;” and I saw the other day a beautiful copy of the celebrated picture known as Guido's Hope, in which the expression is that of intense melancholy. That lovely face looked as if listening to prognostics that were not to be fulfilled.

Well, we removed to Lyme Regis. The house my father took there was, as commonly happens to people whose fortunes

are declining, far more splendid than any we had ever inhabited, indeed the very best in the town. It was situated about the middle of the principal street, and had been during two or three seasons, some twenty years before, rented by the great Lord Chatham, for the use of his two sons, the second Earl and William Pitt, at the time that we occupied it, Prime Minister of England. Hayley, in his *Autobiography*, mentions having seen the youths there. The house, built of the beautiful grey stone of the Isle of Portland, had a great extent of frontage, terminating by large gates surmounted by spread eagles, probably the crest of some former proprietor. An old stone porch, with benches on either side, projected from the centre, covered as was the whole front of the house, with tall, spreading, wide-leaved myrtle, abounding in blossom, with moss-roses, jessamine, and passion-flowers. Behind the buildings, extended round a paved quadrangle, was the drawing-room, a splendid apartment, of which the chimney-piece was surmounted by a copy in marble of Shakespeare's tomb in Westminster Abbey, looking upon a little lawn surrounded by choice evergreens, particularly the bay, the cedar, and the arbutus, and terminated by an old-fashioned greenhouse and a filbert-tree walk, from which again three detached gardens sloped abruptly down to one of the clear dancing rivulets of that western country, reflecting in its small broken stream a low hedge of myrtle and roses. In the steep declivity of the central garden was a grotto, over-arching a cool, sparkling spring, whilst the slopes on either side were carpeted with strawberries and dotted with fruit-trees. One drooping medlar, beneath whose pendant branches I have often hidden, I remember well.

Dearly as I have loved my two later homes, I have never seen anything like that garden. It did not seem a place to be sad in ; neither did the house, with its large, lofty rooms, its noble oaken staircases, its marble hall, and the long galleries and corridors, echoing from morning to night with gay visitors, cousins from the North, friends from Hampshire and Berkshire, and the ever shifting company of the old watering-place. One incident that occurred there—a frightful danger—a providential escape—I shall never forget.

There was to be a ball at the Rooms, and a party of sixteen or eighteen persons dressed for the assembly were sitting in

the dining-room at dessert. The ceiling was ornamented with a rich running pattern of flowers in high relief, the shape of the wreath corresponding pretty exactly with the company arranged round the oval table. Suddenly—whether from the action of the steam of the dinner upon the plaster, or from the movement of the servants in the room, or from some one passing quickly overhead, was never discovered—but in one instant, without the slightest warning, all that part of the ceiling which covered the assembled company became detached, and fell down in large masses upon the table and the floor. It seems even now all but miraculous how such a catastrophe could occur without injury to life or limb—for the portions of moulded stucco, although much broken in their descent, were thick and heavy, and the height of the apartment very considerable; but except the bald head of one venerable clergyman, which was a little scratched, the only things damaged were the flowers and feathers of the ladies, and the crystal and china, the fruits and wines of the dessert. I myself, caught instantly in my father's arms, by whose side I was standing, had scarcely even time to be frightened, although after the danger was over, our fair visitors of course began to scream.

My own nurseries were spacious and airy. But next to the magnificent room in which my grandfather's fine library was arranged, and which, save a very few favourite volumes, remained there, to be dispersed in the chances of an auction, next to the bookroom, always my favourite haunt in every house, the place which I most affected was a dark panelled chamber on the first floor, to which I descended through a private door by half a dozen stairs, so steep that, still a very small and puny child between eight and a half to nine and a half, and unable to run down them in the common way I used to jump from one step to the other. This chamber was filled with such fossils as were then known, for the great landslip at Charmouth had not then laid bare the geological treasures of the place. Still it was rich in specimens of petrifications of various kinds, in glittering spars, in precious-looking ores, in curious shells and gigantic sea-weeds; some the cherished products of my own discoveries, and some broken for me by my father's little hammer from portions of rock that lay beneath the cliffs, under which almost every fine day we used to ramble hand in hand.

Sometimes we would go towards Charmouth, with its sweeping bay passing under the church and churchyard, perched so high above us, and already undermined by the tide ; at another, we bent our steps to the Pinny cliffs on the other side of the harbour, those dark beetling cliffs from whose lofty tops little streams of fresh water fell in slender cascades, finding their narrow way across the sands to the sea ; the beautiful Pinny cliffs, where, about a mile and a half from the town, an old landslip had deposited a farm-house, with its out-buildings, its garden, and its orchard, tossed half way down amongst the rocks, contrasting so strangely its rich and blossoming vegetation, its look of home and of comfort, with the dark rugged masses above, below, and around. Sometimes, at high water, we paced the old pier called the Cob, to which Miss Austen has since given such an interest. And sometimes we turned inland, and ascended the hill to Up-Lyme, with its tufted orchards and its pretty streamlets. I used to disdain those streamlets in those days with such scorn as a small damsel fresh from the Thames and the Kennett thinks herself privileged to display. "They call that a river here, papa ! Can't you jump me over it ?" quoth I, in my sauciness. About a month ago, I heard a young lady from New York talking in some such strain of Father Thames. "It's a pretty little stream," said she, "but to call it a river !" and I half expected to hear a complete reproduction of my own impertinence, and a request to be jumped from one end to the other of Caversham bridge.

Once, too, from the highest story of our own house, I saw that fine and awful spectacle, a great storm. My father took me from my bed at midnight that I might see the grandeur and the glory of the tempest, the spray rising to the very tops of the cliffs, pale and ghastly in the lightning, and hear the roar of the sea, the moaning of the wind, the roll of the thunder, and, amongst them all, the fearful sound of the minute guns, telling of death and danger on that iron-bound coast.

This was the one exception to the general brightness of that lovely bay, and it passed by me like a dream. For the most part, all was beauty on every side ; the sunshine seemed reflected from the rich valleys and the glorious sea ; and the people of the little port, the thriving peasantry, and

the bustling seamen, had a peculiar air of cheerfulness and comfort. It was a strange place to be sad in.

And yet sad I was. Nobody told me, but I felt, I knew, I had an interior conviction, for which I could not have accounted, that, in the midst of all this natural beauty and apparent happiness, in spite of the company, in spite of the gaiety, something was wrong. It was such a foreshowing as makes the quicksilver in the barometer sink whilst the weather is still bright and clear.

And at last the change came. My father went again to London ; and lost—I think, I have always thought so—more money : all, perhaps, except that positively settled upon my mother, and a legacy of rather smaller amount left to me by the maiden sister of the angry cousin. Then, one by one, our visitors departed ; and my father, who had returned in haste again, in equal haste left home, after short interviews with landlords, and lawyers, and auctioneers ; and I knew—I can't tell how, but I did know—that everything was to be parted with, and everybody paid.

That same night two or three large chests were carried away through the garden by George and another old servant, and a day or two after my mother and myself, with Mrs. Mosse, the good housekeeper, who lived with my grandfather before his marriage, and one other maid-servant, left Lyme in a hack chaise. We were to travel post. But in the general trouble nobody had remembered that some camp was breaking up between Bridport and Dorchester, so that when we reached the latter town we found to our consternation that there was neither room for us in any inn, nor chaise, nor horses to pursue our journey. All that could be done for us, after searching through the place, was a conveyance in a vehicle which was going seven or eight miles our way, and from whence there was a prospect of our getting on in the morning. This machine turned out to be a sort of tilted cart without springs, and the jolting upon the Dorsetshire roads fifty-five years ago was doubtless something sufficiently uncomfortable. The discipline of travel teaches people to think little of temporary inconveniences now-a-days, and doubtless many a fine lady would laugh at such a shift. But it was not as a temporary discomfort that it came upon my poor mother. It was her first touch of poverty. It seemed like a final parting

from all the elegances and all the accommodations to which she had been used. I never shall forget her heart-broken look when she took her little girl upon her lap in that jolting caravan (so for the more grace they called the vehicle), nor how the tears stood in her eyes when we were turned altogether into our miserable bed-room when we reached the road-side alehouse where we were to pass the night, and found ourselves, instead of the tea we so much needed, condemned to sup on stale bread and dirty cheese, as people who arrive in tilted carts have been and will be to the end of the world.

The next day we resumed our journey, and reached a dingy comfortless lodging in one of the suburbs beyond Westminster Bridge. What my father's plans were I do not exactly know ; probably to gather together what disposable money still remained after paying all debts from the sale of books, plate, and furniture at Lyme, and thence to proceed (backed up by his greatly lessened income) to practise in some distant town. At all events London was the best starting-place, and he could consult his old fellow-pupil and life-long friend, Dr. Babington, then one of the physicians to Guy's Hospital, and refresh his medical studies with experiments and lectures, whilst determining in what place to bestow himself.

In the meanwhile his spirits returned as buoyant as ever, and so, now that fear had changed into certainty, did mine. In the intervals of his professional pursuits he walked about London with his little girl in his hand ; and one day (it was my birth-day, and I was ten years old) he took me into a not very tempting-looking place, which was, as I speedily found, a lottery office. An Irish lottery was upon the point of being drawn, and he desired me to choose one out of several bits of printed paper (I did not then know their significance) that lay upon the counter :

“Choose which number you like best,” said the dear papa, “and that shall be your birth-day present.”

I immediately selected one, and put it into his hand : No. 2,224.

“Ah,” said my father, examining it, “you must choose again. I want to buy a whole ticket ; and this is only a quarter. Choose again, my pet.”

“No, dear papa, I like this one best.”

"Here is the next number," interposed the lottery office keeper, "No. 2,223."

"Ay," said my father, "that will do just as well. Will it not, Mary? We'll take that."

"No!" returned I, obstinately; "that won't do. This is my birth-day, you know, papa, and I am ten years old. Cast up *my* number, and you'll find that makes ten. The other is only nine."

My father, superstitious like all speculators, struck with my pertinacity, and with the reason I gave, which he liked none the less because the ground of preference was tolerably unreasonable, resisted the attempt of the office keeper to tempt me by different tickets, and we had nearly left the shop without a purchase, when the clerk, who had been examining different desks and drawers, said to his principal:—

"I think, Sir, the matter may be managed if the gentleman does not mind paying a few shillings more. That ticket, 2,224, only came yesterday, and we have still all the shares; one half, one quarter, one eighth, two sixteenths. It will be just the same if the young lady is set upon it."

The young lady was set upon it, and the shares were purchased.

The whole affair was a secret between us, and my father, whenever he got me to himself, talked over our future twenty thousand pounds—just like Alnaschar over his basket of eggs.

Meanwhile, time passed on, and one Sunday morning we were all preparing to go to church, when a face that I had forgotten, but my father had not, made its appearance. It was the clerk of the lottery office. An express had just arrived from Dublin, announcing that No. 2,224 had been drawn a prize of twenty thousand pounds, and he had hastened to communicate the good news.

Ah, me! In less than twenty years what was left of the produce of the ticket so strangely chosen? What? except a Wedgwood dinner-service that my father had had made to commemorate the event, with the Irish harp within the border on one side, and his family crest on the other! That fragile and perishable ware long outlasted the more perishable money!

And then came long years of toil, and struggle, and anxiety, and jolting over the rough ways of the world, of which the

tilted cart of Dorchester offers a feeble type. But it is a subject of intense thankfulness that, although during those long years want often came very close to our door, it never actually entered; and that those far dearer and far better worth than I, were, more than once, saved from its clutches when it seemed nearest by something even more fragile and less durable than Mr. Wedgwood's china or the Irish lottery ticket.

Amongst the consolations and encouragements of those years, I may reckon the partial kindness of the late excellent Mrs. Kenyon, for it is to her fancy for my poor writings that I owe not only her own highly-prized friendship, but the thousand good offices of her accomplished husband.

His poems, full as they are of the largest and most liberal views, of refined taste, and of harmonious versification, make but a small part of his reputation. I think he generally intends to publish them, but he does actually disperse them amongst his friends before the public has time to find them out, so that they have the grace, freshness, and rarity of gift-books: and his hospitality, his benevolence, and his conversational power are far better known than his verse.

Now this verse has to me a singular charm, particularly "The Rhymed Plea for Tolerance," which is so clear, so scholarly, and so full of strong, manly sense. Only see in how short a space he gives a history of English morals, or perhaps, to speak more accurately, of the morals of English literature, from the Commonwealth to the first French Revolution.

When lofty Charles and ancient Privilege
Of new-mailed liberty first felt the siege,
Then first Old England rather groaned than rang
With godly hymns and Barebones' nasal twang.
But then not less the godless cavalier
Flung his loose ballad on the offended ear ;
And still, for so extremes extremes provoke,
Mocked the prim preaching with the ribald joke.

A following century struck a wiser mean ;
The mass was then more cheerful, but more clean.
Yet then unprudish Addison could win,
Then Pope deemed raillery unstarched no sin ;
Then scornful Swift could frolic with free touch,
And Peachum pleased a race that robbed not much.
Some even have played with Congreve's comic lyre,
Nor felt the tinder temperament take fire.

War with pretence satiric Fielding waged,
 Yet thousands read of Blifl unenraged ;
 (For least who feign are least by banter crost,
 'T is doubtful titles stir the passions most ;)
 And follies forth, and forth e'en vices streamed,
 Yet man meanwhile was better than he seemed.

Then too our Second George, not overstaid,
 Would lead his court to merry masquerade,
 And if the mask chance-vices covered there,
 'T was not, as 'neath the Third, life's daily wear.

And Puritans extinct had ceased to rage
 And vex with holy war the graceful stage ;
 And then if Constance, or discrowned Lear,
 Had routed some loftier throb or deeper tear ;
 Or sweet Miranda's purest womanhood
 Touched the fine sense of Beautiful and Good ;
 Or glorious Falstaff, raciest son of earth,
 Shook from his sides immeasurable mirth ;
 Or free Autolycus, as nature free,
 Had won to bear his rogueries for his glee ;
 Even then—no follower of play-scourging Prynne
 Denounced, as now, the sympathy for sin.

And then—though Wesley, strong in fervent youth,
 Strong in man's weakness, strong in his own truth,
 Followers ere long drew round him, Hope and Fear,
 Rueful Pretence and Penitence sincere ;
 Votaries the most with little to resign,
 Rude audience from the workshop or the mine ;
 And though erewhile at Pride's or Faith's command,
 Some titled Dowager would head the band ;
 (For stimulants still charm fair devotee,
 Chapel for church, for writ extempore ;)
 And though a court more decent than before,
 With cowl and hood court-vices covered o'er,
 And cast from Windsor's towers a monkish gloom ;
 Yet Frankness still had genial air and room,
 Free in the main to pray, or sport at will,—
 And our dear land was "merry England" still.

But when, as chanced, from limbs and wearied veins,
 France, slavery stung, burst body-bands and chains ;
 Some were rejoiced ; some doubted ; some were sad ;
 But all at length allowed her Freedom mad ;
 Most for our own proclaimed a muzzle right,
 Some would have slain, so much they feared the bite.
 The danger, seen through mist, loomed large and near,
 And Reason, Principles, were lost in Fear.

Then ancient statesmen took their daily range
 Round one small spot, and shuddering talked of change ;

Or niched, discreet, behind Prescription's shield,
 In his own wrong urged Valour to the field.
 Wealth, mid his coffers, feared the approaching war,
 And ribboned Title trembled for his star ;
 Vague unused terrors crept upon the brave,
 And scarce the scornful Bar its scorn could save.
 The ready Pulpit joined the Statesman's game,
 And Freedom walked our British soil in shame.

Then follows a magnificent character of Burke, proving how just Mr. Kenyon can be to real greatness, in every shade of opinion. The following stanza, from a beautiful poem called "Upper Austria," has the same rare merit of fairness and candour :—

O Liberty ! thou sacred name
 Whate'er reproach may thee befall,
 From judgment just or spiteful blame,
 To thee I cling, on thee I call.
 And yet thou art not all in all;
 And e'en where thou art worshipped less,
 In spite of check, in spite of thrall,
 Content may spring and happiness.

The spirited and original anacreontic, entitled "Champagne Rose" was composed under very peculiar circumstances. Having improvised, while looking at the bubbles upon a glass of pink champagne, the exceeding happy line that begins the song, Mr. Kenyon was challenged to complete it on the spot. He undertook to do so within twenty minutes, and accomplished his task, as very few besides himself could have done.

Lily on liquid roses floating—
 So float yon foam o'er pink Champagne—
 Fain would I join such pleasant boating,
 And prove that ruby main,
 Floating away on wine !

Those seas are dangerous, greybeards swear,
 Whose sea-beach is the goblet's brim ;
 And true it is they drown old Care,
 But what care we for him,
 So we but float on wine !

And true it is they cross in pain
 Who sober cross the Stygian Ferry ;
 But only make our Styx Champagne,
 And we shall cross right merry,
 Floating away on wine !

Old Charon's self shall make him mellow,
 Then gaily row his boat from shore ;
 While we and every jovial fellow
 Hear, unconcerned, the oar
 That dips itself in wine !

The charming stanzas with which I conclude my extracts form part of a poem written to illustrate an engraving in Finden's Tableaux ; one of the many kindnesses which I owe to Mr. Kenyon. It would be difficult to find verse more melodious, or more pure.

THE SHRINE OF THE VIRGIN.

Who knows not, fair Sicilian land !
 How proudly thou wert famed of yore
 When all the Muses hymned thy strand,
 And pleased to tread so sweet a shore.
 Bacchus and Ceres, hand in hand,
 To thee their choicest treasures bore,
 And saw upreared their graceful shrines,
 Mid waving corn and curling vines.

Yes ! land thou wert of fruits and flowers,
 The favoured land of Deity ;
 By Jove made glad with suns and showers,
 By Neptune cheered with brightest sea ;
 E'en Dis, beneath his gloomy bowers,
 Had heard and loved to dream of thee,
 And, when he willed to take a bride,
 Snatched her from Enna's sloping side.

Those hollow creeds have passed away,
 Those false, if graceful, shrines are gone ;
 A purer faith, of stricter sway,
 For our behoof their place hath won ;
 And Christian altars overlay
 Yon temple's old foundation stone ;
 And in Minerva's * vacant cell
 Sublimest wisdom deigns to dwell.

And where, within some deep shy wood,
 And seen but half through curving bough,
 In silent marble Dian stood,
 Behold ! a holier Virgin now
 Hath sanctified the solitude ;
 And thou, meek Mary-Mother ! thou
 Dost hallow each old Pagan spot,
 Or storied stream, or fabled grot !

* The present cathedral of Syracuse was formerly a temple of Minerva.

The devious pilgrim, far beguiled,
 How gladly doth he turn to greet
 Thy long-sought image, mid the wild,
 A calming thought, a vision sweet.
 If grief be his then, Lady mild !
 Thy gentle aid he will entreat,
 And bowed in heart, not less than deed,
 Findeth a prayer to fit the need.

There, while his secret soul he bares,
 That lonely altar bending by,
 The traveller passing unawares,
 Shall stay his step, but not too nigh,
 And hearkening to those unforced prayers,
 Albeit the creed he may deny,
 Shall own his reason less averse,
 And spirit surely not the worse.

Thy shrines are lovely, wheresoe'er,
 And yet, if it were mine to choose
 One, loveliest, where fretted care
 Might come to rest, or thought to muse,
 'T would be that one, so soft and fair
 That standeth by old Syracuse :
 Just where those salt-sea waters take
 The likeness of an inland lake.

Green tendrilled plants, in many a ring
 Creep round the grey stone tenderly,
 As though in very love to cling
 And clasp it ; while the reverent sea
 A fond up-looking wave doth bring
 To break anon submissively ;
 As if it came that brow to greet,
 Then whisper praise beneath thy feet.

* * * *

I love the ever-open door
 That welcomes to the house of God !
 I love the wide-spread marble floor,
 By every foot in freedom trod !
 Free altars let me bow before,
 Free as the pathway or the sod,
 Whence journeying pilgrim, mid broad air,
 Wafts unpremeditated prayer.

I wish more people would write such lucid and melodious verse ; but I have a suspicion that amongst the many who call themselves poets, there are very few indeed who can.

XXX.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

VISIT TO BRISTOL AND CLIFTON.

THOMAS CHATTERTON—ROBERT SOUTHEY—SAMUEL TAYLOR
COLERIDGE—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

FROM Bath we proceeded to Bristol, or rather to Clifton, traversing the tunnels this time with as gay a confidence as I should do now. Of Bath, its buildings, and its scenery, I had heard much good ; of Bristol, its dirt, its dinginess, and its ugliness, much evil. Shall I confess—dare I confess—that I was charmed with the old city ? The tall, narrow, picturesque dwellings, with their quaint gables ; the wooden houses in Wine Street, one of which was brought from Holland bodily, that is to say, in ready-made bits, wanting only to be put together ; the courts and lanes, climbing like ladders up the steep acclivities ; the hanging-gardens, said to have been given by Queen Elizabeth to the washerwomen (everything has a tradition in Bristol) ; the bustling quays ; the crowded docks ; the calm, silent Dowry Parade (I have my own reasons for loving Dowry Parade), with its trees growing up between the pavement, like the close of a cathedral ; the Avon flowing between those two exquisite boundaries, the richly-tufted Leigh Woods clothing the steep hill-side, and the grand and lofty St. Vincent's Rocks, with houses perched upon the summits, that looked ready to fall upon our heads ; the airy line of the chain that swung from tower to tower of the intended suspension-bridge, with its basket hanging in mid-air like the car of a balloon, making one dizzy to look at it ; formed an enchanting picture. I know nothing in English landscape so lovely or so striking as that bit of the Avon beyond the Hot Wells, especially when the tide is in, the ferry-boat crossing, and some fine American ship steaming up the river.

As to Clifton, I suspect that my opinions were a little heretical in that quarter also ; for I could not help wishing the houses away (not the inhabitants—that would have been too ungrateful), and the wide open downs restored to their

primæval space and airiness. How delightful must the Hot Wells have been then ! and how much greater the chance of recovery for invalids, who could add the temptation of such a spot for rides and drives to the salubrity of the waters !

I had an hereditary interest in the Hot Wells ; my own mother having accompanied her only brother thither to die. It was one of the brief romances which, under different forms, most families probably could tell : A young man of the highest promise, a Fellow of Oriel, as his father had been before him, and just entered of Lincoln's Inn, who galloped to Reading, after dark, to dance with a county beauty, and returned the same way the moment the ball was ended. He had offered his hand, for more than the evening, to the lady of his love, and had been accepted. But the chill of a snowy winter night, after such exercise and such excitement, struck to his chest ; rapid consumption ensued, and the affianced lovers never met again. It is often the best and the fairest who die such deaths. Every one knows Mason's fine epitaph on his young wife, in this very cathedral :—

Take, holy earth, all that my soul holds dear,
Take that best gift which Heaven so lately gave !
To Bristol's fount I bore with trembling care
Her faded form : she bowed to taste the wave,
And died.

The first place that I visited was connected with a far deeper tragedy, the beautiful church of St. Mary Redcliffe, I climbed up to the muniment room over the porch, now and for ever famous ; and, sitting down on the stone chest, then empty, where poor Chatterton pretended to have found the various writings he attributed to Rowley, and from whence he probably did obtain most of the ancient parchment that served as his material, I could understand the effect that the mere habit of haunting such a chamber might produce upon a sensitive and imaginative boy. Even in that rude and naked room, the majesty and grandeur of the magnificent church make themselves strongly felt. The dim light, the massive walls, the echoing pavement under foot, the vaulted roof over head, all tend to produce the solemn feeling peculiar to a great ecclesiastical edifice. Even the two monuments of Cannynge, down below, one in the secular, the other in the priestly habit, impress upon the mind the image of the muni-

ficient patron to whom St. Mary Redcliffe owes its sublimity and beauty. The forgeries of Chatterton will always remain amongst the wonders of genius ; but they become less incredible after having breathed the atmosphere of that muniment chamber.

The humbler buildings connected with

*“The marvellous boy
Who perished in his pride,”*

have been nearly all swept away by the barbarous hand of Improvement ; but every one whom I met showed me some site, or told me some tradition, bearing on his lamentable story. There his father taught a little school ; there he was born ; there his widowed mother dwelt : one person shows you the dress of the charity boys on whose foundation he was placed ; another recites to you the verses (quite as remarkable as the juvenile poems of Pope or Cowley) which he wrote at eleven years of age ; a third relates anecdotes of the attorney to whom he was articled ; while a fourth produces a copy of the newspaper which contained his first successful attempt at deception—the description of the ceremonies which attended the first passing of the old bridge by the Friars, which he sent to a Bristol journal, upon the opening of the new. After this the number of the forgeries, antiquarian, heraldic, and poetical, was astonishing. Local interest was engaged and personal vanity. The beauty of the poems was acknowledged on all hands, and had, perhaps, no small share in the general credulity ; for it seemed easier to believe in the alleged Rowley, than to assign their authorship to the real Chatterton. Nay, even to this hour, one of the most accomplished men whom I have ever known (to be sure, he has no objection to a paradox) professes, chiefly on this ground, his entire faith in the genuineness of the manuscripts.

Confident in his own powers, and full of proud anticipation, the luckless boy set forth for London : seized on every word of praise as an earnest of fortune ; sent nearly all his poor earnings to his mother and sister, accompanied by letters full of the brightest hope ; and at last, disenchanted, maddened, starved, took poison, and was interred in a shell in the burying-ground belonging to Shoe Lane workhouse. He had not completed his eighteenth year. There is a story told that, a

little before his death, wandering in St. Pancras churchyard, he fell into an open grave, and seemed to seize upon it as an omen. A most painful irreligious paper, called his will, written, let us hope, under the influence of the same frenzy that prompted his suicide, is shown in a glass-case in the museum at Bristol ; and I saw at Mr. Cottle's two very interesting reliques of the unhappy writer—the Berghem (or, as he called it, de Berghem) pedigree, one of his earliest forgeries, curiously and skilfully emblazoned ; and a tattered pocket-book, in which the poor boy had set down, with careful exactness, the miserable pittance he had gained by writing for magazines and newspapers while in London—a pittance so wretched, as to render it certain that utter destitution, utter starvation (although, with characteristic pride, he had refused a dinner from his landlady the day before) was the immediate cause of the catastrophe.

In spite of the old spelling, the fine personification of Freedom, in the chorus of “Goddwyn” makes its way to the mind :—

Whan Freedom dreste yn blodde-stayned veste
 To everie knyghte her warre-songe sunge,
 Uponne her hedde wylde wedes were spredde
 A gorie anlace bye her honge.
 She dannedc onne the heathe ;
 She hearde the voice of dethe ;
 Pale eyned Affryghte his harte of sylver hue
 In vayne assayled her bosome to acale
 She hearde onfliedem the shriekyng voice of Woe,
 And sadnessse ynne the owllette shake the dale.
 She shooke the burled speere,
 On high she jeste her sheelde,
 Her foemen all appere,
 And flizze alonge the feelde.

Modern spelling, and a very little transposition, would make a charming pastoral of the minstrel's song in *Œlla* :—

FIRST MINSTREL.

The budding flowret blushes at the light ;
 The meads are sprinkled with their yellowest hue :
 In daisied mantle is the mountain dight ;
 The tender cowslip bendeth with the dew.
 The evening comes and brings that dew along ;
 The ruddy welkin shineth to the eyne ;
 Around the ale-stake minstrels sing the song.
 Young ivy round the door-post to entwine
 I lay me on the grass. Yet to my will,
 Albeit all is fair, there lacketh something still.

SECOND MINSTREL.

When Autumn bleak and sunburnt doth appear
 With golden hand gilding the falling leaf,
 Bringing up Winter to fulfil the year,
 Bearing upon his back the ripened sheaf ;
 When the fair apple, red as evening sky,
 Doth bend the tree unto the fruitful ground ;
 When juicy pear and berry of black dye
 Do dance in air and tempt the taste around ;
 Then be the evening foul or evening fair,
 Methinks that my heart's joy is shadowed with some care.

THIRD MINSTREL.

So Adam thought when first in Paradise
 All heaven and earth did homage at his feet ;
 In gentle woman all man's pleasure lies
 'Midst Autumn's beating storms or summer's heat :
 Go take a wife unto thy heart and see
 Winter and the brown hills will have a charm for thee.

Remains of the society that rendered Clifton illustrious fifty years ago still lingered there : accomplished relatives of the Edgeworths, the Beddoes's, and the Porters. The Sketcher of Blackwood, eminent as artist (amateur artist) and writer, scholar and wit, adorned the society. There too was his one picture, worth many a grand collection — a picture which, when once seen, can never be forgotten—the St. Catherine of Domenichino, from which Sir Joshua borrowed the attitude of his Tragic Muse. The more the light was reduced, the more that figure started from the canvas. Two remarkable women also were there : Mrs. Schimmelpenninck, authoress of "A Tour to Alet ;" a charming, venerable lady, with her Moravian dress and language, and her habit of feeding and comforting everything she came near ; she would walk out alone, and return with a train of dogs and children, expecting and receiving doles of cake and gingerbread from her inexhaustible pockets ; and Mrs. Harriet Lee, who was unfortunately absent during my visit. I am not much addicted to lion-hunting, but it was a real loss not to see the authoress of "Kruitzner," one of the very few original stories which our predecessors have not stolen from us.

The most interesting resident of the neighbourhood I did, however, see. My kind friend, the Sketcher, drove me, by invitation, to drink tea at Firfield, a house used during the

war as a French prison, and then inhabited by Mr. Cottle and his sister.

Mr. Cottle had been during seven years a bookseller at Bristol, and had during that time had the singular fortune, let me add the liberality and good taste, to publish the first works of Southey, of Coleridge, and of Wordsworth. Himself the author of many works of excellent feeling and tendency, and of one ("The Recollections of Coleridge") of the very highest merit. I found him as I had expected, a mild and venerable man, distinguished for courtesy and intelligence. He received us in a room stored with books and piled with portfolios, into each of which he had most carefully inserted the letters of such correspondents as few persons could boast. Letters of Sir Humphry Davy, of Robert Hall, of John Foster, of Hannah More, of Charles Lloyd, of Charles Lamb, of Mr. Landor, of Coleridge, of Southey, of Wordsworth, and of a certain John Henderson, who might, Mr. Cottle said, have excelled them all, but who died at nine-and-twenty, and left nothing behind him except an immense reputation for general power, and especially for the power of conversation. "He evaporated in talk." His father had been a neighbouring schoolmaster, and had retained his gifted son as his assistant, until driven by general remonstrance into sending him to Oxford. When he arrived there, the astonishment that such a scholar should come to be taught seems to have been universal. He staid on, however, and in the course of a few years died. I remember to have heard the same account of him from my good old friend, Dr. Valpy, whom he occasionally visited at Reading, and who spoke of him as a very disturbing visitor to a man of regular habits. He would sit smoking and talking till three or four o'clock in the morning, neither of them remembering the hour, John Henderson carrying the good doctor away by the flow of his eloquence. It may be doubted whether, if he had lived, he would have left anything behind him except a great recollection.

Besides these portfolios (many of them very bulky, and some from men whose names have probably escaped me), the walls were hung with portraits of these illustrious friends, some engravings, some drawings, some oil-paintings, and many of them repeated two or three different times, at different ages. Mr. Cottle was engaged in transcribing Southey's letters, for a

life even then projected, and since executed by his son. He said, that of his various epistolary collections he thought Southey's the most amusing, preferring them even to those he had received from Charles Lamb. Very few of these letters are inserted in Mr. Cuthbert Southey's work (doubtless he was embarrassed by his over-riches); but I cannot help thinking that a selection of familiar epistles from all the portfolios would be a very welcome gift to the literary world. People can hardly know too much of these great poets, and of such prose writers as Charles Lamb, John Foster, and Robert Hall.

Both Coleridge and Southey were married at Bristol ; Coleridge certainly, and Southey, I think, at the beautiful church of St. Mary Redcliffe. Upon my mentioning this to the parish clerk, very learned upon the subject of Chatterton, he was surprised into confessing his ignorance of the fact, and got as near as a parish clerk ever does to an admission that he had never heard the first of those illustrious names. So strange a thing is local reputation.

Plenty of people, however, were eager to show me the localities rendered famous by Southey, and I looked with delight on his father's house, his early home. How great and how good a man he was ! how fine a specimen of the generosity of labour ! Giving so largely, so liberally, so unostentatiously, not from the superfluities of an abundant fortune, but from the hard-won earnings of his indefatigable toil ! Some people complain of his change of politics ; and I, for my own particular part, wish very heartily that he had been content with a very moderate modification of opinion. But does not the violent republicanism of youth often end in the violent toryism of age ? Does not the pendulum, very forcibly set in motion, swing as far one way as it has swung the other ? Does not the sun rise in the east and set in the west ?

As to his poetry, I suspect people of liking it better than they say. He was not Milton or Shakespeare, to be sure ; but are we to read nobody but Shakespeare or Milton ? I will venture to add the "Lines on a Holly-tree :"—

O reader ! hast thou ever stood to see
The holly-tree ?
The eye that contemplates it well, perceives
Its glossy leaves

Ordered by an intelligence so wise
As might confound the atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen ;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound ;
But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with anxious eyes
And moralise :
And in this wisdom of the holly-tree
Can emblems see
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme
One that will profit in the after time.

Thus though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude
Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be,
Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree.

And as, when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green ;
The holly leaves their fadeless hue display
Less bright than they,
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheeful as the holly-tree ?

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem among the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the holly-tree.

But he has not done himself justice in this comparison. Never was man more beloved by all who approached him. Even his peculiarities, if he had any, were genial and pleasant. One anecdote I happen to know personally. He was invited to a large evening party, at Tavistock House, the residence of Mr. Perry, proprietor of the "Morning Chronicle," a delightful person, where men of all parties met, forgetting their political differences in social pleasure. The guest was so punctual,

that only two young inmates were in the room to receive him.

"What are we to have to-night?" inquired he of Miss Lunan, Mr. Perry's niece, and Professor Porson's step-daughter.

"Music, I suppose," was the reply; "at least I know that Catalani is coming!"

"Ah!" rejoined the poet, "then I shall come another time. You will not miss me. Make my excuses!" and off he ran, laughing at his own dislike to opera singers and bravura songs.

Everybody has heard the often-told story of Coleridge's enlisting in a cavalry regiment under a feigned name, and being detected as a Cambridge scholar in consequence of his writing some Greek lines, or rather, I believe, some Greek words, over the bed of a sick comrade, whom, not knowing how else to dispose of him, he had been appointed to nurse. It has not been stated that the arrangement for his discharge took place at my father's house at Reading. Such, however, was the case. The story was this. Dr. Ogle, Dean of Winchester, was related to the Mitfords, as relationships go in Northumberland, and having been an intimate friend of my maternal grandfather, had no small share in bringing about the marriage between his young cousin and the orphan heiress. He continued to take an affectionate interest in the couple he had brought together, and the 15th Light Dragoons, in which his eldest son had a troop, being quartered in Reading, he came to spend some days at their house. Of course Captain Ogle, between whom and my father the closest friendship subsisted, was invited to meet the Dean, and in the course of the dinner told the story of the learned recruit. It was at the beginning of the great war with France; men were procured with difficulty, and if one of the servants waiting at table had not been induced to enlist in his place, there might have been some hesitation in procuring a discharge. Mr. Coleridge never forgot my father's zeal in the cause, for kind and clever as he was, Captain Ogle was so indolent a man, that without a flapper, the matter might have slept in his hands till the Greek kalends. Such was Mr. Coleridge's kind recognition of my father's exertions, that he had the infinite goodness and condescension to look over the proof sheets of two girlish efforts, "Christina" and "Blanch," and to encourage the young writer by gentle

strictures and stimulating praise. Ah! I wish she had better deserved this honouring notice!

I add one of his sublimest poems.

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Hast thou a charm to stay the Morning Star
 In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
 On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
 Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines
 How silently! Around thee and above
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
 An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it
 As with a wedge! But when I look again
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
 Thy habitation from eternity!
 O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee
 Till thou, still present to the bodily sense
 Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
 I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet like some sweet beguiling melody,
 So sweet we know not we are listening to it,
 Thou the meanwhile wast blending with my thought,
 Yea with my life, and life's own secret joy;
 Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,
 Into the mighty vision passing—there
 As in her natural form swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake my soul! not only passive praise
 Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy. Awake!
 Voice of sweet song! Awake my heart, awake!
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale!
 Or struggling with the darkness all the night,
 And visited all night by troops of stars,
 Or when they climb the sky or when they sink
 Companion of the Morning Star at dawn,
 Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
 Co-herald! wake, O wake, and utter praise!
 Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
 Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
 Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents, fiercely glad!
 Who called you forth from night and utter death,
 From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
 For ever shattered and the same for ever?
 Who gave you your invulnerable life,
 Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,

Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?
 And who commanded (and the silence came),
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest ?
 Ye ice-falls ! ye that from the mountain's brow
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge !
 Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts !
 Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
 Beneath the keen full moon ? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?—
 God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer ! and let the ice-plains echo God !
 God ! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice !
 Ye pine-groves with your soft and soul-like sounds !
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder God !

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost !
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest !
 Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm !
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds !
 Ye signs and wonders of the element !
 Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise !

Thou too, hoar Mount ! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
 Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
 Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene,
 Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast—
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain ! thou,
 That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
 In adoration, upward from thy base
 Slow travelling with dim eyes, suffused with tears,
 Solemnly seemest like a vapoury cloud
 To raise before me—Rise, O ever rise ;
 Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth !
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
 Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven,
 Great hierarch ! tell thou the silent sky,
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

One cannot look too often upon Mr. Wordsworth's charming female portrait :—

She was a phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight :
 A lovely apparition sent
 To be a moment's ornament ;
 Her eyes as stars of twilight fair ;
 Like twilight too her dusky hair ;

But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful dawn ;
 A dancing shape, an image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view
 A spirit, yet a woman too !
 Her household motions light and free
 And steps of virgin liberty ;
 A countenance in which did meet
 Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
 A creature not too bright and good
 For human nature's daily food ;
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.

And now I see with eyes serene
 The very pulse of the machine ;
 A being breathing thoughtful breath ;
 A traveller betwixt life and death ;
 The reason firm, the temperate will,
 Endurance, foresight, strength and skill,
 A perfect woman nobly planned,
 To warn, to comfort, and command ;
 And yet a spirit still and bright,
 With something of an angel light.

I would add "Laodamia," if it were not too long, and the "Yew-trees," if I had not a misgiving that I have somewhere planted those deathless trunks before. In how many ways is a great poet glorious ! I met with a few lines taken from that noble poem the other day in the "Modern Painters," cited for the landscape :—

Redia

" Huge trunks, and each particular trunk a growth
 Of intertwined fibres serpentine,
 Upcoiling and inveterately convolved !
 Beneath whose shade
 With sheddings from the pinal umbrage tinged
 Perennially—"

and so forth. Mr. Ruskin cited this fine passage for the picture, I for the personifications :—

" Ghostly shapes

May meet at noon-tide, Fear and trembling Hope,
 Silence and Foresight, Death the skeleton,
 And Time the shadow ! "

Both quoted the lines for different excellences, and both were right.

XXXI.

AMERICAN POETS.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

AMONGST the strange events of these strange days of ours, when revolutions and counter-revolutions, constitutions changed one week and rechanged the next, seem to crowd into a fortnight the work of a century, annihilating time, just as railways and electric telegraphs annihilate space—in these days of curious novelty, nothing has taken me more pleasantly by surprise than the school of true and original poetry that has sprung up among our blood relations (I had well nigh called them our fellow-countrymen) across the Atlantic; they who speak the same tongue and inherit the same literature. And of all this flight of genuine poets, I hardly know any one so original as Dr. Holmes. For him we can find no living prototype; to track his footsteps, we must travel back as far as Pope or Dryden; and to my mind it would be well if some of our own bards would take the same journey—provided always it produced the same result. Lofty, poignant, graceful, grand, high of thought, and clear of word, we could fancy ourselves reading some pungent page of “Absalom and Achitophel,” or of the “Moral Epistles,” if it were not for the pervading nationality, which, excepting Whittier, American poets have generally wanted, and for that true reflection of the manners and the follies of the age, without which satire would fail alike of its purpose and its name.

The work of which I am about to offer a sample, all too brief, is a little book much too brief itself; a little book of less than forty pages, described in the title-page as “Astræa—a Poem, delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Yale College, August 1850, by Oliver Wendell Holmes, and printed at the request of the Society.”

The introduction tells most gracefully in verse that rather, perhaps, implies than relates, the cause of the author’s visit to the college, dear to him as the place of his father’s education:—

What secret charm long whispering in mine ear,
 Allures, attracts, compels, and chains me here,
 Where murmuring echoes call me to resign
 Their sacred haunts to sweeter lips than mine ;
 Where silent pathways pierce the solemn shade,
 In whose still depths my feet have never strayed ;
 Here, in the home where grateful children meet,
 And I, half alien, take the stranger's seat,
 Doubting, yet hoping that the gift I bear
 May keep its bloom in this unwonted air ?
 Hush, idle fancy, with thy needless art,
 Speak from thy fountains, O my throbbing heart !
 Say shall I trust these trembling lips to tell
 The fireside tale that memory knows so well ?
 How in the days of Freedom's dread campaign,
 A home-bred schoolboy left his village plain,
 Slow faring southward, till his wearied feet
 Pressed the worn threshold of this fair retreat ;
 How with his comely face and gracious mien,
 He joined the concourse of the classic green,
 Nameless, unfriended, yet by Nature blest
 With the rich tokens that she loves the best ;
 The flowing locks, his youth's redundant crown,
 Smoothed o'er a brow unfurrowed by a frown :
 The untaught smile, that speaks so passing plain,
 A world all hope, a past without a stain ;
 The clear-hued cheek, whose burning current glows
 Crimson in action, carmine in repose ;
 Gifts such as purchase, with unminted gold,
 Smiles from the young and blessings from the old.

Is not the portrait of the boy beautiful ? The poem goes on :—

Say shall my hand with pious love restore
 The faint far pictures time beholds no more ?
 How the grave senior, he whose later fame
 Stamps on our laws his own undying name,
 Saw from on high with half-paternal joy
 Some spark of promise in the studious boy,
 And bade him enter, with paternal tone,
 The stately precincts which he called his own.

* * * * *

How kindness ripened, till the youth might dare,
 Take the low seat beside his sacred chair,
 While the gray scholar bending o'er the young,
 Spelled the square types of Abraham's ancient tongue,
 Or with mild rapture stooped devoutly o'er
 His small coarse leaf alive with curious lore ;
 Tales of grim judges, at whose awful beck,
 Flashed the broad blade across a royal neck ;
 Or learned dreams of Israel's long-lost child,
 Found in the wanderer of the western wild.

Dear to his age were memories such as these,
Leaves of his June in life's autumnal breeze;
Such were the tales that won my boyish ear,
Told in low tones that evening loves to hear.
Thus in the scene I pass so lightly o'er,
Trod for a moment, then beheld no more,
Strange shapes and dim, unseen by other eyes,
Through the dark portals of the past arise;
I see no more the fair embracing throng,
I hear no echo to my saddened song,
No more I heed the kind or envious gaze,
The voice of blame, the rustling thrill of praise:
Alone, alone, the awful past I tread,
White with the marbles of the slumbering dead,
One shadowy form my dreaming eyes behold,
That leads my footsteps as it led of old,
One floating voice, amid the silence heard,
Breathes in my ear love's long unspoken word;—
These are the scenes thy youthful eyes have known,
My heart's warm pulses claim them as its own;
The sapling compassed in thy fingers' clasp,
My arms scarce circle in their twice-told grasp,
Yet in each leaf of yon o'ershadowing tree,
I read a legend that was traced by thee.
Year after year the living wave has beat
These smooth-worn channels with its trampling feet,
Yet in each line that scores the grassy sod,
I see the pathway where thy feet have trod;
Though from the scene that hears my faltering lay,
The few that loved thee long have passed away,
Thy sacred presence all the landscape fills,
Its groves, and plains, and adamantine hills!
Ye who have known the sudden tears that flow,
Sad tears, yet sweet, the dews of twilight woe,—
When led by chance, your wandering eye has crossed
Some poor memorial of the loved and lost,
Bear with my weakness as I look around
On the dear relics of this holy ground,
These bowery cloisters, shadowed and serene,
My dreams have pictured ere mine eyes have seen.
And, oh, forgive me, if the flower I brought,
Droops in my hand beside this burning thought;
The hopes and fears that marked this destined hour,
The chill of doubt, the startled throb of power,
The flush of pride, the trembling glow of shame,
All fade away, and leave my Father's name!

The grace and pathos of this introduction must be felt by every one. It has all the sweetness of Goldsmith, with more force and less obviousness of thought.

The poem opens with a description of an American spring,

equally true to general nature and to the locality where it is written. The truth is so evident in the one case, that we take it for granted in the other. The couplet on the crocus, for instance,—a couplet so far as I know unmatched in flower-painting,—gives us most exquisitely expressed, an image that meets our eye every March. The “shy turtles ranging their platoons,” we never have seen, and probably never shall see, and yet the accuracy of the picture is as clear to us as that of the most familiar flower of our border.

Winter is past ; the heart of Nature warms
 Beneath the wrecks of unresisted storms ;
 Doubtful at first, suspected more than seen,
 The Southern Slopes are fringed with tender green ;
 On sheltered banks, beneath the dripping eaves,
 Spring's earliest nurslings spread their glowing leaves,
 Bright with the hues from wider pictures won,
 White, azure, golden,—drift, or sky, or sun :
 The snowdrop, bearing on her patient breast
 The frozen trophy torn from winter's crest ;
 The violet, gazing on the arch of blue
 Till her own iris wears its deepened hue ;
 The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould
 Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold.
 Swelled with new life, the darkening elm on high
 Prints her thick buds against the spotted sky ;
 On all her boughs the stately chestnut cleaves
 The gummy shroud that wraps her embryo leaves ;
 The housefly, stealing from his narrow grave,
 Drugged with the opiate that November gave,
 Beats with faint wing against the snowy pane
 Or crawls tenacious o'er its lucid plain ;
 From shaded chinks of lichen-crusted walls
 In languid curves the gliding serpent crawls ;
 The bog's green harper, thawing from his sleep
 Twangs a hoarse note and tries a shortened leap ;
 On floating rails that face the softening noons
 The still shy turtles range their dark platoons,
 Or toiling, aimless, o'er the mellowing fields,
 Trail through the grass their tessellated shields.

At last young April, ever frail and fair,
 Wooed by her playmate with the golden hair,
 Chased to the margin of receding floods,
 O'er the soft meadows starred with opening buds
 In tears and blushes sighs herself away
 And hides her cheek beneath the flowers of May.

Then the proud tulip lights her beacon blaze,
 Her clustering curls the hyacinth displays,
 O'er her tall blades the crested fleur-de-lis

Like blue-eyed Pallas towers erect and free,
 With yellower flames the lengthened sunshine glows,
 And love lays bare the passion-breathing rose;
 Queen of the lake, along its reedy verge
 The rival lily hastens to emerge,
 Her snowy shoulders glistening as she strips,
 Till morn is sultan of her parted lips.

Then bursts the song from every leafy glade
 The yielding season's bridal serenade ;
 Then flash the wings returning summer calls
 Through the deep arches of her forest halls ;
 The blue-bird breathing from his azure plumes,
 The fragrance borrowed where the myrtle blooms ;
 The thrush, poor wanderer, dropping meekly down,
 Clad in his remnant of autumnal brown ;
 The oriole, drifting like a flake of fire,
 Rent by the whirlwind from a blazing spire.
 The robin jerking his spasmodic throat
 Repeats, staccato, his peremptory note ;
 The crack-brained bobolink courts his crazy mate
 Poised on a bulrush tipsy with his weight.
 Nay, in his cage the lone canary sings,
 Feels the soft air and spreads his idle wings :—
 Why dream I here within these caging walls,
 Deaf to her voice while blooming Nature calls,
 While from Heaven's face the long-drawn shadows roll,
 And all its sunshine floods my opening soul !

After this we are introduced to a winter room, delineated with equal taste and fidelity :—the very home of lettered comfort :—

Yet in the darksome crypt I left so late,
 Whose only altar is its rusted grate,
 Sepulchral, rayless, joyless as it seems,
 Shamed by the glare of May's resplendent beams,
 While the dim seasons dragged their shrouded train
 Its paler splendours were not quite in vain.
 From these dull bars the cheerful firelight's glow
 Streamed through the casement o'er the spectral snow ;
 Here, while the night-wind wreaked its frantic will
 On the loose ocean and the rock-bound hill,
 Rent the cracked topsail from its shivering yard,
 And rived the oak a thousand storms had scarred,
 Fenced by these walls the peaceful taper shone,
 Nor felt a breath to swerve its trembling cone.

Nor all unblest the mild interior scene
 When the red curtain spreads its folded screen ;
 O'er some light task the lonely hours were past,
 And the long evening only flew too fast ;
 Or the wide chair its leatherne arms would lend
 In genial welcome to some easy friend

Stretched on its bosom with relaxing nerves,
 Slow moulding, plastic to its hollow curves ;
 Perchance indulging, if of generous creed,
 In brave Sir Walter's dream-compelling weed.
 Or, happier still, the evening hour would bring
 To the round table its expected ring,
 And while the punch-bowl's sounding depths were stirred,
 Its silver cherubs smiling as they heard,
 O'er caution's head the blinding hood was flung,
 And friendship loosed the jesses of the tongue.

Then follows an enumeration not merely of books but of printers, which, I confess, took me a little by surprise. I knew that wide readers were widely spread in the United States ; and that there was no lack either of ripe scholars or of extensive libraries. I should have fully expected to find such a man as Dr. Holmes amongst the buyers of the best works, ancient and modern, but hardly amongst the collectors of choice editions. That, I confess, did give me a very pleasant astonishment. Woman although I be, I have lived enough with such people to hold them in no small reverence. Aye, and I know the Baskerville Virgil well enough by sight to recognise the wonderful accuracy of the portrait. Is there anything under the sun that Dr. Holmes cannot paint !

Such the warm life this dim retreat has known,
 Not quite deserted when its guests were flown ;
 Nay, filled with friends, an unobtrusive set,
 Guiltless of calls and cards and etiquette,
 Ready to answer, never known to ask,
 Claiming no service, prompt for every task.

On those dark shelves no housewife care profanes,
 O'er his mute files the monarch folio reigns,
 A mingled race, the wreck of chance and time,
 That talk all tongues and breathe of every clime ;
 Each knows his place, and each may claim his part
 In some quaint corner of his master's heart.
 This old Decretal, won from Kloss's hoards,
 Thick-leaved, brass-cornered, ribbed with oaken boards,
 Stands the gray patriarch of the graver rows,
 Its fourth ripe century narrowing to its close ;
 Not daily conned, but glorious still to view,
 With glistening letters wrought in red and blue.
 There towers Stagira's all-embracing sage,
 The Aldine anchor on his opening page ;
 There sleep the births of Plato's heavenly mind
 In yon dark tome by jealous clasps confined,
 "Olim e libris"—(dare I call it mine)
 Of Yale's great Head and Killingworth's divine !

In those square sheets the songs of Maro fill
The silvery types of smooth-leafed Baskerville ;
High over all, in close compact array,
Their classic wealth the Elzevirs display.
In lower regions of the sacred space
Range the dense volumes of a humbler race ;
There grim chirurgeons all their mysteries teach
In spectral pictures or in crabbed speech ;
Harvey and Haller, fresh from Nature's page,
Shoulder the dreamers of an earlier age,
Lully and Geber and the learned crew
That loved to talk of all they could not do.
Why count the rest, whose names of later days
That many love and all agree to praise ?
Or point the titles where a glance may read
The dangerous lines of party or of creed ?
Too well perchance the chosen list would show
What few may care and none can claim to know.
Each has his features, whose exterior seal
A brush may copy or a sunbeam steal ;
Go to his study—on the nearest shelf
Stands the mosaic portrait of himself.
What though for months the tranquil dust descends,
Whitening the heads of these mine ancient friends.
While the damp offspring of the modern press
Flaunts on my table with its pictured dress ;
Not less I love each dull familiar face,
Nor less should miss it from the appointed place.
I snatch the book along whose burning leaves
His scarlet web our wild romancer weaves,
Yet, while proud Hester's fiery pangs I share,
My old *Magnalia* must be standing *there*."

Such is the opening of the "Astræa." It speaks much for the man whose affluence of intellect could afford such an outpouring for a single occasion, the recitation of one solitary evening ; and hardly less for the audience that prompted and welcomed such an effort.

The little book was sent to me among many others by a most kind and talented young friend, to whose unfailing attention I owe pleasure upon pleasure of this high nature. * In my answer I expressed the admiration which I so truly felt, and the next packet brought a fresh claim upon my gratitude ; a volume of "Dr. Holmes's Collected Poems," of I know not what edition ; for as man and as author he commands an immense popularity in Boston, the capital of literature in North America. This volume is enriched with an autograph and a portrait, both eminently characteristic—the hand-writing

being clear, free, vigorous, delicate, such a hand as could be written by none but an accomplished gentleman ; and the engraving just like the picture which I had painted of him in my own mind. There is a print of Hogarth's, "The Election Ball," full of people with their hats flung into a corner ; and it is said of that print that every hat could be adjusted to the figure to which it belonged. Now I feel quite certain that if there were a collection of living authors of all countries, Dr. Holmes's head would be assigned to its right owner ; the features and expression, not according to this system or that, but according to that stamp of character and intellect which we all tacitly recognise, belong so entirely to him individually as we see him in his works.

Besides this engraving, the volume contains, together with a good deal of very pleasant occasional poetry, much truth and much beauty. I transcribe some passages full of charity, —a quality which, especially in a religious sense, is perhaps rarer than either. The power will speak for itself :—

"What is thy creed ?" a hundred lips inquire ;
 "Thou seekest God beneath what Christian spire ?"
 Nor ask they idly, for uncounted lies
 Float upward on the smoke of sacrifice ;
 When man's first incense rose above the plain,
 Of earth's two altars, one was built by Cain !

Uncursed by doubt our earliest creed we take ;
 We love the precepts for the teacher's sake ;
 The simple lessons which the nursery taught
 Fell soft and stainless on the buds of thought,
 And the full blossom owes its fairest hue
 To those sweet tear-drops of affection's due.

Too oft the light that led our earlier hours
 Fades with the perfume of our cradle flowers ;
 The clear cold question chills to frozen doubt.
 Tired of beliefs we dread to live without.
 Oh ! then if Reason waver at thy side,
 Let humbler memory be thy gentle guide ;
 Go to thy birthplace, and if faith was there,
 Repeat thy father's creed, thy mother's prayer.

Faith loves to lean on Time's destroying arm,
 And age, like distance, lends a double charm.
 In dim cathedrals, dark with vaulted gloom,
 What holy awe invests the saintly tomb !
 There Pride will bow, and anxious Care expand,
 And creeping Avarice come with open hand ;

The gay can weep, the impious can adore
 From morn's first glimmerings on the chancel floor
 Till dying sunset sheds his crimson stains
 Through the faint halos of the irised panes.

Yet there are graves whose rudely-shapen sod
 Bears the fresh footprints where the sexton trod ;
 Graves where the verdure has not dared to shoot,
 Where the chance wild-flower has not fixed its root,
 Whose slumbering tenants, dead without a name,
 The eternal record shall at length proclaim
 Pure as the holiest in the long array
 Of hooded, mitred or tiaraed clay !

* * * *

Deal meekly, gently with the hopes that guide
 The lowliest brother straying from thy side ;
 If right they bid thee tremble for thine own,
 If wrong, the verdict is for God alone.

What though the champions of thy faith esteem
 The sprinkled fountain or baptismal stream ;
 Shall jealous passions in unseemly strife
 Cross their dark weapons o'er the waves of life ?

Let my free soul expanding as it can
 Leave to his scheme the thoughtful Puritan ;
 But Calvin's dogma shall my lips decide ?
 In that stern faith my angel Mary died,
 Or ask if Mercy's milder creed can save,
 Sweet sister risen from thy new-made grave ?

True, the harsh founders of thy church reviled
 That ancient faith, the trust of Erin's child ;—
 Must thou be raking in the crumbled past
 For racks and fagots in her teeth to cast ?
 See from the ashes of Helvetia's pile
 The whitened skull of old Servetus smile !

* * * *

Grieve as thou must o'er History's reeking page ;
 Blush for the wrongs that stain thy happier age ;
 Strive with the wanderer from the better path,
 Bearing thy message meekly, not in wrath ;
 Weep for the frail that err, the weak that fall,
 Have thine own faith,—but hope and pray for all.

I conclude with the following genial stanzas, worth all the temperance songs in the world, as inculcating temperance. They really form a compendium of the history of New England :—

ON LENDING A PUNCH-BOWL.

This ancient silver bowl of mine, it tells of good old times,
 Of joyous days, and jolly nights, and merry Christmas chimes ;
 They were a free and jovial race, but honest, brave, and true,
 That dipped their ladle in the punch, when this old bowl was new.

A Spanish galleon brought the bar,—so runs the ancient tale,—
 'Twas hammered by an Antwerp smith, whose arm was like a flail ;
 And now and then between the strokes, for fear his strength shoul'd
 He wiped his brow, and quaffed a cup of good old Flemish ale [fail,

'T was purchased by an English squire, to please his loving dame,
 Who saw the cherubs, and conceived a longing for the same ;
 And oft, as on the ancient stock, another twig was found,
 'T was filled with caudle, spiced and hot, and handed smoking round.

But changing hands, it reached at length a Puritan divine,
 Who used to follow Timothy, and take a little wine,
 But hated punch and prelacy ; and so it was, perhaps,
 He went to Leyden where he found conventicles and schnaps.

And then, of course you know what's next,—it left the Dutchman's
 shore,

With those that in the May flower came,—a hundred souls and
 Along with all the furniture to fill their new abodes,— [more,—
 To judge by what is still on hand,—at least a hundred loads.

'T was on a dreary winter's eve, the night was closing dim,
 When old Miles Standish took the bowl, and filled it to the brim ;
 The little captain stood and stirred the posset with his sword,
 And all his sturdy men-at-arms were ranged about the board.

He poured the fiery Hollands in,—the man that never feared—
 He took a long and solemn draught, and wiped his yellow beard,
 And one by one the musketeers—the men that fought and prayed—
 All drank as 'twere their mother's milk, and not a man afraid.

That night, affrighted from his nest, the screaming eagle flew,
 He heard the Pequot's ringing whoop, the soldier's wild halloo ;
 And there the sachem learned the rule he taught to kith and kin,
 " Run from the white man when you find he smells of Hollands gin."

A hundred years, and fifty more, had spread their leaves and snows,
 A thousand rubs had flattened down each little cherub's nose,
 When once again the bowl was filled, but not in mirth or joy,
 'T was mingled by a mother's hand to cheer her parting boy.

" Drink, John," she said, " 'twill do you good—poor child, you 'll
 never bear

This working in the dismal trench out in the midnight air ;
 And if—God bless me !—you were hurt, 't would keep away the chill."
 So John *did* drink—and well he wrought that night at Bunker's Hill!

I tell you there was generous warmth in good old English cheer ;
 I tell you 't was a pleasant thought to bring its symbol here,
 'T is but the fool that loves excess. Hast thou a drunken soul ?
 The bane is in thy shallow skull, not in my silver bowl !

I love the memory of the past—its pressed yet fragrant flowers—
 The moss that clothes its broken walls—the ivy on its towers—
 Nay this poor bauble it bequeathed—my eyes grow moist and dim
 To think of all the vanished joys that danced around its brim.

Then fill a fair and honest cup, and bear it straight to me ;
The goblet hallows all it holds, whate'er the liquid be ;
And may the cherubs on its face protect me from the sin
That dooms one to those dreadful words—"My dear, where *have*
you been ?"

Dr. Holmes is still a young man, and one of the most eminent physicians in Boston. He excels in singing his own charming songs, and speaks as well as he writes ; and, after reading even the small specimens of his poetry that my space has enabled me to give, my fair readers will not wonder to hear that he is one of the most popular persons in his native city.

He is a small compact little man (says our mutual friend), the delight and ornament of every society that he enters, buzzing about like a bee, or fluttering like a humming-bird, exceedingly difficult to catch unless he be really wanted for some kind act, and then you are sure of him.

XXXII.

LETTERS OF AUTHORS.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

BESIDES the rich collections of State Papers and Historical Despatches which have been discovered in the different public offices, and the still more curious bundles of family epistles (such as the Paxton correspondence), which are every now and then disinterred from the forgotten repositories of old mansions, there is no branch of literature in which England is more eminent than the letters of celebrated men.

From the moment in which Mason by a happy inspiration made Gray tell his own story, and by dint of his charming letters contrived to produce from the uneventful life of a retired scholar one of the most attractive books ever printed, almost every biographer of note has followed his example. The lives of Cowper, of Byron, of Scott, of Southey, of Charles Lamb, of Dr. Arnold, works full of interest and vitality, owe their principal charm to this source. Nay, such is the reality and identity belonging to letters written at the moment and intended only for the eye of a favourite friend, that it is

probable that any genuine series of epistles, were the writer ever so little distinguished, would, provided they were truthful and spontaneous, possess the invaluable quality of individuality which so often causes us to linger before an old portrait of which we know no more than that it is a Burgo-master by Rembrandt, or a Venetian Senator by Titian. The least skilful pen, when flowing from the fulness of the heart, and untroubled by any misgivings of after publication, shall often paint with as faithful and life-like a touch as either of those great masters.

Of letter-writers by profession we have indeed few, although Horace Walpole, bright, fresh, quaint, and glittering as one of his own most precious figures of Dresden china, is a host in himself. But every here and there, scattered in various and unlikely volumes, we meet with detached letters of eminent persons which lead us to wish for more. I remember two or three of David Hume's which form a case in point: one to Adam Smith, who had asked of him the success of his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," in which he dallies with a charming playfulness with an author's anxiety, withholding, delaying, interrupting himself twenty times, and at last pouring out without stint or measure the favourable reception of the work; another, to Dr. Robertson, who appears to have requested his opinion of his style, bantering him on certain Scottish provincialisms and small pedantries—"a historian, indeed! Have you *an* ear?"—mixed with praise so graceful and kindness so genuine, that the most susceptible of vanities could not have taken offence.

Every now and then, too, we fall upon a long correspondence which the writer's name has caused to be published, but which, from a thousand causes, is certain to fall into oblivion, although containing much that is curious. Such is "The Life and Letters of Samuel Richardson."

I suspect that the works from whence that great name is derived are in this generation little more than a tradition; and that the "Clarissa" and the "Sir Charles Grandison," which, together with the "Spectators," formed the staple of our great grandmothers' libraries, find almost as few readers amongst their descendants as the "Grand Cyrus," or "The Princess of Cleves."

As far as "Clarissa" is concerned, great tragedy as the

book unquestionably is, I do not wonder at this. Considering the story and plan of the work, the marvel is rather that mothers should have placed it in their daughters' hands as a sort of manual of virtue, and that at Ranelagh, ladies of the highest character should have held up the new volumes as they came out, to show to their friends that they possessed the book of which all the world were talking, than that it should now be banished from the boudoir and the drawing-room. But as my friend, Sir Charles Grandison, has no other sin to answer for than that of being very long, very tedious, very old-fashioned, and a prig, I cannot help confessing that, in spite of these faults, and perhaps because of them, I think there are worse books printed now-a-days, and hailed with delight amongst critics feminine than the seven volumes that gave such infinite delight to the Beauties of the Court of George the Second.

As pictures of manners I suspect them to be worthless. Richardson was a citizen in an age in which the distinctions of caste were far more strictly observed than now-a-days ; and the printer of *Salisbury Court*, even when retired to his villa at North End, had seen but little of the brilliant circles which he attempted to describe, and was altogether deficient in the airy grace and bright and glowing fancy which might have supplied the place of experience. Compared with the comic dramatists, Congreve and Farquhar, who have left us such vivid pictures of the *Mirabels* and *Millamants*, the *Archers*, and *Mrs. Sullens* of that day, Richardson's portraits are, like himself, stiff, prim, hard, ungainly, awkward. In manners, he utterly fails ; but in character, in sentiment, and above all, in the power of bringing his personages into actual every-day life, he leaves every writer of his time far behind him. Somebody has said of him very happily—so happily that I suppose it must have been Hazlitt,—“that the effect of reading his books is to acquire a vast accession of near relations.” And it is true. Grandmothers and grandfathers, uncles, aunts, and cousins multiply upon us ; we not only become acquainted with the people, but with their habitations ; *Selby House* and *Shirley Manor* are as familiar to us as our own dwelling ; and we could find our way to the cedar-parlour blindfolded.

It was a cause or a consequence of Richardson's popularity that he lived amongst a perfect flower-garden of young ladies,

feeding upon their praises—always a dangerous diet for authors,—and talking and writing of little else than his different works. His own family consisted of three daughters, of whom (although his domestic character stands very high) we hear little, whilst of Miss Highmore, Miss Mulso, Miss Westcomb, the Miss Fieldings, and the Miss Colliers, and their several lovers, we hear a great deal. There is even a coloured engraving, curiously inartistic, representing Richardson a smug and comely little old man sitting in the summer-house which he called his grotto, reading his manuscript to a party of three fair damsels and their future husbands.

The lady who seems to have interested him most—whose letters, with his rejoinders, do actually fill a volume and a half of the six of which the collection consists, and might easily, the editor says, have been extended to six more—is a certain Lady Bradshaigh, the wife of Sir Roger Bradshaigh, of the Haigh, Lancashire, who wrote to him first under the feigned name of Balfour, and continued to address him under that appellation for a considerable time.

The occasion of her first letter was the suspense in which the admirers of "Clarissa" were left as to her fate, by the publication of the work in separate portions and at lengthened intervals. The story of the book may be told in very few words. It consists of the betrayal of the heroine by her lover, a libertine, drawn with admirable spirit and skill, and endowed with so many fine qualities of person and intellect, that many of the author's friends implored, as if they had been real persons, for the reformation of Lovelace, and the happiness of his fair mistress.

Upon this hint spoke Lady Bradshaigh; and her earnestness and pertinacity is really a thing to wonder at. She sank upon her knees, she begged, she reasoned, she threatened, she stormed. There was not a weapon in the female armoury that she did not force into her service; and her ardour and fervency give so much eloquence to her pleadings, that she has considerably the best of the dispute; chiefly because Richardson had not honesty enough to tell her the real cause of his resolution to bring the story to a tragic end, which was of course its artistic effect, but entrenched himself in all sorts of pitiful evasions and false moralities, instead of saying frankly that a happy conclusion would have spoilt the book.

Elaine

The author was obdurate, and the lady disappointed ; nevertheless the correspondence continued, and one of the most amusing and characteristic episodes in these six volumes is the story of a journey which Lady Bradshaigh took to London, and of her introduction to her unknown correspondent.

The great novelist was at this time in his sixtieth year, and the fair lady, a buxom country dame, might be some ten or fifteen years his junior (N.B. I have remarked it as a singular circumstance, that we never can ascertain a lady's age, even if, as in this case, she have been dead these hundred years, with the same absolute accuracy with which we can verify a gentleman's baptismal registry) ; and, whether from shyness or from pure coquetry, she (still as Mrs. Balfour) makes an appointment to meet him in the Park, requesting from him a description by which he may be recognised. He sends her the following :—

“ Short, rather plump, about five feet five inches, fair wig ; one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support, when attacked by sudden tremors or dizziness ; of a light brown complexion, teeth not yet failing him.”

What follows is very characteristic :—

“ Looking directly foreright, as passengers would imagine, but observing all that stirs on either hand of him, without moving his short neck ; a regular even pace, stealing away ground rather than seeming to rid it ; a grey eye, too often overclouded by mistiness from the head ; by chance lively, very lively if he sees any he loves ; if he approaches a lady, his eye is never fixed first on her face, but on her feet, and rears it up by degrees, seeming to set her down as so-and-so.”

She actually did know him by this portrait, but had the cruelty to keep him parading up and down while she surveyed him at her leisure, and went away without declaring herself. This is her own account of the matter :—

“ Well, Sir, my curiosity is satisfied as to the distant view. I passed you four times last Saturday in the Park ; knew you by your own description, at least three hundred yards off, walking between the trees and the Mall ; and had an opportunity of surveying you unobserved, your eyes being engaged among the multitude, looking, as I knew, for a certain will-o'-

the-wisp, who, I have a notion, escaped being known to you, though not your notice, for you looked at me every time I passed! but I put on so unconcerned a countenance, that I am almost sure I deceived you. * * * O that this first meeting was over!

“ Shall I tell you, Sir, what it puts me in mind of? When I was very young, I had a mind to bathe in a cold bath. When I came to the edge, I tried it first with one hand, then with the other. In the same manner, my feet; drew them back again; ventured to my ankles, then drew back. But, having a strong inclination to go farther (being very sure I should like it, were the first shock over), I at last took a resolution, and plunged at once over head and ears, and, as I imagined, was delighted; so that I only repented I had not before found courage to execute what gave me so much pleasure.”

Still, however, the lady coquets, and the gentleman becomes a little angry; after some repetition of his grievances, he continues:—

“ Yet I resolved to try my fortune on Saturday in the Park, in my way to North End. The day, indeed, thought I, is not promising; but where so great an earnestness is professed, and the lady, possibly, by this time made acquainted with the disappointment she has given me, who knows but she will be carried in a chair to the Park, to make me amends, and there reveal herself. Three different chairs at different times saw I. My hope, therefore, not so very much out of the way; but in none of them the lady I wished to see. Up the Mall walked I; down the Mall, and up again, in my way to North End. Oh, this dear will-o'-the-wisp, thought I! When nearest, farthest off! Why should I at this time of life! And all the spiteful things I could think of I muttered to myself. And how, Madam, am I to banish them from my memory, when I see you so very careful to conceal yourself; when I see you so very apprehensive of my curiosity, and so little confiding in my generosity? Oh, Madam! you know me not! You will not know me!”

And so they go on, the gentleman remonstrating, the lady holding back, through fifty pages of letter-press—more or less; and when their cross-purposes would have ended there is no divining, had not Lady Bradshaigh gone to Mr. High-

more's, to view a portrait of her unknown friend, where enough transpired to suggest to the painter, who knew of the correspondence, that he was talking to the person who had so mystified the unlucky author. He discovered that the gentleman who escorted her was of Lancashire, and called Sir Roger: his servant heard the surname from the coachman, and was positive that it began with a B; and after so much had been done in the way of detection, the fair delinquent avowed herself, and the game of hide and seek was fairly over. Let it be added, that, in spite of all this nonsense, Lady Bradshaigh was a warm-hearted and well-conducted woman, and that her devotion to the writer of her idolatry ended only with his life.

I have said that Richardson's correspondents were almost exclusively feminine, although there are a few letters from Dr. Young, Colley Cibber, Aaron Hill, and others of that class, and one note from Dr. Johnson, whom our printer, familiar with kind and generous actions, had had the honour to bail. These female correspondents all, with one exception, bear out an opinion which I have long ventured to entertain of the general inferiority of women's letters. For the truth of which I would only appeal to the collections of such as are most celebrated in that line, from the over-rated Lady Mary Wortley Montagu down to Anna Seward. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Delany, Mrs. Vesey, Miss Talbot, Miss Bowdler, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Mrs. Hannah More—what are they? There is, to be sure, one great exception in general literature—for Madame de Sevigné is, perhaps, the most delightful letter-writer who ever put pen to paper. And there is another exception, also a foreigner, in this collection—an exception all the more charming because foreign, for the German idiom undoubtedly adds grace and freshness to the sweet simplicity of Mrs. Klopstock's communications. I need not apologise for transcribing them all. Would that she had been spared to write more!

“Hamburg, November 29th, 1750.

“Honoured Sir,

“Will you permit me to take this opportunity, in sending a letter to Dr. Young, to address myself to you? It is very long ago that I wished to do it. Having finished your ‘Clarissa,’ (oh, the heavenly book!) I could have prayed you to

write the history of a manly Clarissa, but I had not courage enough at that time. I should have it no more to-day, as this is only my first English letter—but I have it! It may be because I am now Klopstock's wife (I believe you know my husband by Mr. Hohorst), and then I was only the single young girl. You have since written the manly Clarissa, without my prayer. Oh, you have done it, to the great joy and thanks of all your happy readers! Now you can write no more, you must write the history of an angel.

“Poor Hohorst! he is gone. Not killed in the battle (he was present at two), but by the fever. The Hungarian hussars have taken your works, with our letters, and all what he was worth, a little time before his death. But the King of Prussia recompensed him with a company of cavalry. Poor friend! he did not long enjoy it.

“He has made me acquainted with all your lovely daughters. I kiss them all with my best sisterly kiss, but especially Mrs. Martha, of whom he says that she writes as her father. Tell her in my name, dear Sir, if this be true, that it is an affair of conscience not to let print her writings. Though I am otherwise of that sentiment, that a woman who writes not thus, or as Mrs. Rowe, should never let print her works.

“Will you pardon me this first long letter, Sir? Will you tell me if I shall write a second? I am, honoured Sir, your most humble servant,

“M. KLOPSTOCK.”

“Hamburg, March 14th, 1758.

“You are very kind, Sir, to wish to know everything of your Hamburg kindred. Then I will obey, and speak of nothing but myself in this letter.

“You will know all what concerns me. Love, dear Sir, is all what me concerns. And love shall be all what I will tell you in this letter.

“In one happy night I read my husband's poem, ‘The Messiah.’ I was extremely touched with it. The next day, I asked one of his friends who was the author of this poem? and this was the first time I heard Klopstock's name. I believe I fell immediately in love with him. At the least, my thoughts were ever with him filled, especially because his friend told me very much of his character. But I had no hopes ever to see him, when quite unexpectedly I heard that

he should pass through Hamburg. I wrote immediately to the same friend, for procuring by his means that I might see the author of 'The Messiah,' when in Hamburg. He told him that a certain girl at Hamburg wished to see him, and, for all recommendation, showed him some letters in which I made bold to criticise Klopstock's verses. Klopstock came, and came to me. I must confess that, though greatly prepossessed of his qualities, I never thought him the amiable youth whom I found him. This made its effect. After having seen him two hours, I was obliged to pass the evening in a company which never had been so wearisome to me. I could not speak ; I could not play ; I thought I saw nothing but Klopstock. I saw him the next day and the following, and we were very seriously friends. But the fourth day he departed. It was a strong hour, the hour of his departure. He wrote soon after ; and from that time our correspondence began to be a very diligent one. I sincerely believed my love to be friendship. I spoke with my friends of nothing but Klopstock, and showed his letters. They rallied at me, and said I was in love. I rallied them again, and said that they must have a very friendshipless heart, if they had no idea of friendship to a man as well as to a woman. Thus it continued for eight months, in which time my friends found as much love in Klopstock's letters as in me. I perceived it likewise, but I would not believe it. At the last, Klopstock said plainly that he loved ; and I startled as for a wrong thing. I answered that it was no love, but friendship as it was what I felt for him ; we had not seen one another enough to love (as if love must have more time than friendship !) This was sincerely my meaning, and I had this meaning till Klopstock came again to Hamburg. This he did a year after we had seen one another the first time. We saw we were friends ; we loved, and we believed that we loved ; and a short time after I could even tell Klopstock that I loved. But we were obliged to part again, and wait two years for our wedding. My mother would not let me marry a stranger. I could marry then without her consent, as, by the death of my father, my fortune depended not on her. But this was a horrible idea for me, and thank Heaven that I have prevailed by prayers ! At this time, knowing Klopstock, she loves him as her lively son, and thanks God that she has not persisted. We married, and

I am the happiest wife in the world. In some few months it will be four years that I am so happy, and still I dote upon Klopstock as if he was my bridegroom.

“If you knew my husband you would not wonder. If you knew his poem I could describe him very briefly, by saying he is in all respects what he is as a poet. This I can say with all wifely modesty. But I dare not to speak of my husband ; I am all raptures when I do it. And as happy as I am in love, so happy am I in friendship in my mother, two elder sisters, and five other women. How rich I am !

“Sir, you have willed that I should speak of myself, but I fear I have done it too much. Yet you see how it interests me.

“I am, Sir, &c. &c. &c.”

“Hamburg, May 6th, 1758.

“It is not possible, Sir, to tell you what a joy your letters give me. My heart is very able to esteem the favour that you in your venerable age are so condescending good to answer so soon the letters of an unknown young woman, who has no other merit than a heart full of friendship, though at so many miles of distance.

“It will be a delightful occupation for me, my dear Mr. Richardson, to make you more acquainted with my husband’s poem. Nobody can do it better than I, being the person who knows the most of that which is not yet published ; being always present at the birth of the young verses, which begin always by fragments here and there of a subject of which his soul is just then filled. He has many great fragments of the whole work ready. You may think that two people, who love as we do, have no need of two chambers. We are always in the same. I, with my little work, still, still, only regarding my husband’s sweet face, which is so venerable at that time ! with tears of devotion and all the sublimity of the subject. My husband reading me his young verses and suffering my criticisms. Ten books are published, which I think probably the middle of the whole. I will, as soon as I can, translate you the arguments of these ten books, and what besides I think of them. The verses of the poem are without rhymes, and are hexameters, which sort of verses my husband has been the first to introduce in our language, we being still closely attached to the rhymes and iambics.

“And our dear Dr. Young has been so ill? But he is better, I thank God along with you. And you, my dear, dear friend, have not hope of cure of a severe nervous malady? How I trembled as I read it! I pray God to give to you at the least patience and alleviation. Though I can read very well your hand-writing, you shall write no more if it is incommodious to you. Be so good to dictate only to Mrs. Patty; it will be very agreeable to me to have so amiable a correspondent. And then I will still more than now preserve the two of your own handwriting as treasures.

“I am very glad, Sir, that you will take my English as it is. I knew very well that it may not always be English, but I thought for you it was intelligible. My husband asked me, as I was writing my first letter, if I would not write in French? ‘No,’ said I, ‘I will not write in this pretty but *fade* language to Mr. Richardson’ (though so polite, so cultivated, and no longer *fade* in the mouth of a Bossuet). As far as I know, neither we, nor you, nor the Italians have the word *fude*. How have the French found this characteristic word for their nation? Our German tongue, which only begins to be cultivated, has much more conformity with the English than the French.

“I wish, Sir, I could fulfil your request of bringing you acquainted with so many good people as you think of. Though I love my friends dearly, and though they are good, I have however much to pardon, except in the single Klopstock alone. *He* is good, really good, good at the bottom—in all the foldings of his heart. I know him; and sometimes I think if we knew others in the same manner, the better we should find them. For it may be that an action displeases us which would please us, if we knew its true aim and whole extent. No one of my friends is so happy as I am; but no one has had courage to marry as I did. They have married as people marry; and they are happy as people are happy. Only one, as I may say my dearest friend, is unhappy, though she had as good a purpose as I myself. She has married in my absence; but had I been present, I might, it may be, have been mistaken in her husband as well as she.

“How long a letter is this again! But I can write no short ones to you. Compliments from my husband, &c &c.”

"Hamburg, August 27th, 1758.

"Why think you, dear Sir, that I answer so late? I will tell you my reasons. But before all, how does Miss Patty, and how do yourself? Have not you guessed that I, summing up all my happinesses, and not speaking of children, had none? Yes, Sir, this has been my only wish ungratified for these four years. I have been more than once unhappy with disappointments: but yet, thanks, thanks to God, I am in full hope to be mother in the month of November. The little preparations for my child and child-bed (and they are so dear to me) have taken so much time that I could not answer your letter, nor give the promised scenes of 'The Messiah.' This is likewise the reason why I am still here, for properly we dwell in Copenhagen. Our staying here is only a visit (but a long one) which we pay my family. I not being able to travel yet, my husband has been obliged to make a little voyage alone to Copenhagen! He is absent—a cloud over my happiness! He will soon return.—But what does that help? He is yet equally absent!—We write to each other every post—but what are letters to presence?—But I will speak no more of this little cloud; I will only tell my happiness! But I cannot tell how I rejoice! A son of my dear Klopstock! Oh, when shall I have him? It is long since I have made the remark, that geniuses do not engender geniuses. No children at all, bad sons, or at the most lovely daughters like you and Milton. But a daughter or a son only, with a good heart, without genius, I will nevertheless love dearly.

"I think that about this time a nephew of mine will wait on you. His name is *Winlhem*, a young rich merchant, who has no bad qualities, and several good, which he has still to cultivate. His mother was, I think, twenty years older than I, but we other children loved her dearly like a mother. She had an excellent character, but is long since dead.

"This is no letter but only a newspaper of your Hamburg daughter. When I have my husband and my child I will write you more (if God gives me health and life). You will think that I shall not be a mother only but a nurse also; though the latter (thank God that the former is not so too) is quite against fashion and good breeding, and though nobody can think it possible to be always with the child at home.

"M. KLOPSTOCK."

This was the last letter from this sweet creature. The next in the series is from a different hand.

“Hanover, December 21st, 1758.

“Honoured Sir,

“As perhaps you do not know that one of your fair correspondents, Mrs. Klopstock, died in a very dreadful manner, in child-bed, I think myself obliged to acquaint you with this most melancholy accident.

“Mr. Klopstock, in the first motion of his affliction, composed an ode to God Almighty, which I have not yet seen, but I hope to get by and by.

“I shall esteem myself highly favoured by a line or two from any of your family, for I presume you sometimes kindly remember.

“Your most humble servant,

“And great admirer,

“L. L. G. MAJOR.”

A subsequent letter contradicts the fact of the ode's being composed at this time. But a comparison of the dates of Mr. Major's communication and of Mrs. Klopstock's last interesting letter, still brings this poetising a great calamity far too near the time of its occurrence, to be satisfactory to those who have read and sympathised with the quick feelings of the devoted wife. It is pleasanter to remember that Klopstock never married again, till, in his old age, a few years before his death, he had the ceremony performed between himself and a kinswoman, who lived with him, in order to entitle her, as his widow, to the pensions he enjoyed from different Courts.

XXXIII.

FINE SINGLE POEMS.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, ETC.

NOTHING seems stranger amidst the strange fluctuations of popularity, than the way in which the songs and shorter poems of the most eminent writers occasionally pass from the

highest vogue into the most complete oblivion, and are at once forgotten, as if they had never been. Scott's spirited ballad, "The Bonnets of Bonnie Dundee," is a case in point. Several persons (amongst the rest Mrs. Hughes, the valued friend of the author) have complained to me, not only that it is not included among Sir Walter's ballads, but that they were unable to discover it elsewhere. Upon mentioning this to another dear friend of mine, the man who, of all whom I have known, has the keenest scent for literary game, and is the most certain to discover a lost poem, he threw himself upon the track, and failing to obtain a printed copy, succeeded in procuring one in manuscript, taken down from the lips of a veteran vocalist; not, as I should judge, from his recitation, but from his singing, for it is no uncommon thing with singers to be unable to divorce the sense from the sound, so that you must have the music with the words, or go without them altogether.

At all events this transcript is a curiosity. The whole ballad is written as if it were prose: no capital at the beginning of the lines; no break, as indicated by the rhyme, at the conclusion; no division between the stanzas. All these ceremonies are cast aside with a bold contempt for vulgar usages, and the entire song thrown into one long paragraph. I think it is Cowper who wrote a rhyming letter upon the same principle; but the jingle being more obtrusive, and the chorus a wanting, the effect of the intentional pleasantry is far less ludicrous than that produced by this unconscious and graver error.

I endeavoured to restore the natural divisions of the verse; and having since discovered a printed copy, buried in the Doom of Devorgoil, where of course nobody looked for it, I am delighted to transfer to my pages one of the most spirited and characteristic ballads ever written.

To the Lords of Convention 't was Claverhouse who spoke,
Ere the king's crown shall fall there are crowns to be broke;
So let each cavalier who loves honour and me,
Come follow the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can;
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the Westport and let us gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
 The bells are rung backward, the drums they are beat ;
 But the Provost, douce man, said, " Just e'en let him be,
 The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee ! "

Come fill up my cup, &c.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the Bow
 Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow ;
 But the young plants of grace they looked cowthie and slee,
 Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny Dundee !

Come fill up my cup, &c.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-market was thranged
 As if half the West had set tryst to be hanged ;
 There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e
 As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
 And lang-hafted gullies to kill cavaliers ;
 But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway was free
 At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

He spurred to the foot of the proud castle rock,
 And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke ;
 " Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words or three
 For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."

Come fill up my cup, &c.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—
 " Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose !
 Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me
 Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

" There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth ;
 If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the North ;
 There are wild Duniewassals three thousand times three
 Will cry ' Hoigh ! ' for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

" There's brass on the target of barkened bull-hide,
 There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside ;
 The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall flash free
 At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

" Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks,—
 Ere I own an usurper I'll crouch with the fox ;
 And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
 You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me."

Come fill up my cup, &c.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,
 The kettle-drums clashed, and the horsemen rode on,
 Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lea
 Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can ;
 Come saddle the horses, and call up the men ;
 Come open your gates, and let me gae free,
 For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee !

There are abundant indications that the "Bonnets of Bonny Dundee" was a favourite with its illustrious writer. The following song, from "The Pirate," is interesting, not merely from its own merit, but from an anecdote related by Mr. Lockhart. When on a tour in the North of England, it was sung to Sir Walter as set by Mrs. Robert Arkwright. "Beautiful words," observed he; "Byron's of course." He was much shocked when undeceived.

The stanzas themselves are deeply touching. They form part of a serenade, sung by Cleveland under Minna's window when compelled to return to his ship.

Farewell ! farewell ! the voice you hear
 Has left its last soft tone with you ;
 It's next must join the seaward cheer,
 And shout among the shouting crew.

The accents which I scarce could form,
 Beneath your frown's controlling check,
 Must give the word above the storm
 To cut the mast and clear the wreck.

The timid eye I dared not raise,
 The hand that shook when pressed to thine,
 Must point the guns upon the chase,
 Must bid the deadly cutlass shine.

To all I love or hope or fear,
 Honour or own, a long adieu !
 To all that life has soft and dear,
 Farewell ! save memory of you !

The lines have much of the flow peculiar to Lord Byron, and were therefore perhaps selected as adapted to her purpose by their musical composer. In general, musical people say that Sir Walter Scott's songs are ill suited to music, difficult to set, difficult to sing. One cannot help suspecting that the fault rests with the music, that cannot blend itself with such poetry. Where in our language shall we find more delicious melody

than in “County Guy?” The rhythm of the verse rivals the fancy of the imagery and the tenderness of the thought.

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea;
The orange flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark his lay who trilled all day,
Sits hushed his partner nigh;
Bee, bird, and bower confess the hour :—
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy by lattice high,
Sings high-born cavalier.
The star of love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence know :—
But where is County Guy?

This little poem can hardly be surpassed ; but here are two others, one by the late, and one by the present Laureate, worthy to be printed on the same page.

LUCY.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways,
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye;
Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me!

Mr. Tennyson's delicious song, published only in the later editions of “The Princess,” is less generally known.

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory:
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying;
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

Oh, hark ! oh, hear ! how thin and clear
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
 Oh ! sweet and far, from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing.
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying ;
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.
 O love, they die on yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill, on field, on river ;
 Our echoes roll from soul to soul
 And grow for ever and for ever.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying ;
 And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

It is like a descent from Fairyland to the wild stormy ocean, to turn from the dying falls of Mr. Tennyson's stanzas to the homely sea-song of Allan Cunningham. And yet that sea-song has high merit ; it resembles the bold stalwart form, the free and generous spirit of the author, one of the noblest specimens of the Scottish peasant, elevated into a superior rank, as much by conduct and character, as by talent and industry.

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
 A wind that follows fast,
 And fills the white and swelling sail,
 And bends the gallant mast :
 And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
 While like the eagle free,
 Away the good ship flies, and leaves
 Old England on the lea.
 "Oh, for a soft and gentle wind !"
 I heard a fair one cry ;
 But give to me the snoring breeze
 And white waves heaving high !
 And white waves heaving high, my boys,
 The good ship light and free ;
 The world of waters is our home,
 And merry men are we.
 There's tempest in yon horned moon,
 And lightning in yon cloud ;
 And hark ! the music, mariners,
 The wind is piping loud !
 The wind is piping loud, my boys,
 The lightning flashing free ;
 Whilst the hollow oak our palace is,
 Our heritage the sea !

One of the most charming of English song-writers, happily still spared to us, is he who, under the name of Barry Corn-

wall, has given so many fine lyrics to our language. What can be more spirited than this Bacchanalian song ?

Sing !—who sings
 To her who weareth a hundred rings ?
 Ah, who is this lady fine ?
 The Vine, boys, the Vine !
 The mother of mighty wine.
 A roamer is she
 O'er wall and tree,
 And sometimes very good company.

Drink !—who drinks
 To her who blusheth and never thinks ?
 Ah, who is this maid of mine ?
 The Grape, boys, the Grape !
 Oh never let her escape
 Until she be turned to wine.
 For better is she
 Than vine can be,
 And very, very good company.

Dream !—who dreams
 Of the God that governs a thousand streams ?
 Ah, who is this spirit fine ?
 'Tis Wine, boys, 'tis Wine !
 God Bacchus, a friend of mine.
 Oh better is he
 Than grape or tree,
 And the best of all good company.

I cannot resist the temptation of adding to the stanzas of the living poet one from him that can never die.

SONG.—FROM “ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.”

Come, thou monarch of the vine,
 Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne,
 In thy vats our cares be drowned ;
 With thy grapes our hairs be crowned ;
 Cup us till the world go round ;
 Cup us till the world go round.

Of Thomas Hood's four great lyrical poems, the greatest is “The Bridge of Sighs ;” it is one gush of tenderness and charity.

One more unfortunate
 Weary of breath,
 Rashly importunate
 Gone to her death !
 Take her up tenderly,
 Lift her with care ;
 Fashioned so slenderly,
 Young and so fair !

Look at her garments,
Clinging like cements ;
While the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing ;
Take her up instantly,
Loving not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully ;
Think of her mournfully ;
Gently and humanly ;
Not of the stains of her :
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny,
Rash and undutiful ;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still for all slips of hers
One of Eve's family ;
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammy.
Loop up her tresses,
Escaped from the comb ;
Her fair auburn tresses :
While wonderment guesses
Where was her home.

Who was her father ?
Who was her mother ?
Had she a sister ?
Had she a brother ?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other ?

Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun !
Oh ! it was pitiful !
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed.
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence ;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver,
So far in the river,
With a many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver,
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurled;
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world.

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran;
Over the brink of it
Picture it, think of it,
Dissolute man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young and so fair!
Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen so rigidly
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes close them,
Staring so blindly!
Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurned by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest;
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving with meekness
Her sins to her Saviour!

Perhaps the best companion—companion in contrast—to “The Bridge of Sighs,” is Coleridge’s “Genevieve !”

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve,
And she was there my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve.

She leant against the arméd man,
The statue of the arméd knight,
She stood and listened to my lay
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand,
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land :

I told her how he pined—and oh !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I told another's love,
Interpreted my own !

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lonely knight,
And how he crossed the mountain wood
Nor rested day or night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,
There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright,
And that he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable knight;
And that, unknowing what he did,
He leapt among a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;
And how she wept, and clasped his knees,
And how she tended him in vain,
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;
And how she nursed him in a cave,
And how his madness went away
When on the yellow forest leaves
A dying man he lay;
His dying words—But when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity.
All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve,
The music, and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;
And hopes and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!
She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin shame,
And like the murmur of a dream
I heard her breathe my name.
Her bosom heaved, she stept aside,
As conscious of my look she stept,
Then suddenly with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.
She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me in a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up
And gazed upon my face.
'T was partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 't was a bashful art,
That I might rather feel than see
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears and she was calm,
 And told her love with virgin pride ;
 And so I won my Genevieve,
 My bright and beauteous bride.

How charmingly Milton has fitted his verse to his subject in the "Song on May Morning."

Now the bright Morning Star, day's harbinger,
 Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
 The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
 Hail, bounteous May ! that dost inspire
 Mirth and youth and warm desire ;
 Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
 Hill and dale can boast thy blessing.
 Thus we salute thee with our early song,
 And welcome thee and wish thee long.

The wild and desolate stanzas, supposed to be suggested by an equally wild and desolate landscape in Alton Locke, are very touching. I am a neighbour of Mr. Kingsley's now ; if I live to write another book I hope to be privileged to call myself his friend.

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
 And call the cattle home,
 And call the cattle home,
 Across the sands o' Dee ;"
 The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,
 And all alone went she.

The creeping tide came up along the sand,
 And o'er and o'er the sand,
 And round and round the sand,
 As far as eye could see ;
 The blinding mist came down and hid the land—
 And never home came she.

"Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair,—
 A tress o' golden hair,
 O' drowned maiden's hair,
 Above the nets at sea ?
 Was never salmon yet that shone so fair,
 Among the stakes o' Dee."

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
 The cruel crawling foam,
 The cruel hungry foam,
 To her grave beside the sea ;
 But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
 Across the sands o' Dee.

Another poem, quite as desolate and far more painful, inasmuch as the tale of suffering is reflected back upon the author, is "The Castaway," the last verses that poor Cowper ever wrote. Every one knows that the terrible gloom which overshadowed that fine mind arose from insanity; and I know a story of madness amongst his near friends, and I believe also his blood relations, almost as affecting.

In early youth I was well acquainted with two old ladies, Mrs. Theodosia and Frances Hill, sisters to the "Joe Hill," the favourite and constant friend, who figures so frequently in Cowper's correspondence. These excellent persons lived at Reading, and were conspicuous through the town for their peculiarities of dress and appearance. Shortest and smallest of women, they adhered to the costume of fifty years before, and were never seen without their high lappeted caps, the enormous hoops, brocaded gowns, ruffles, aprons, and fur-belowes of our grandmothers. They tottered along upon high-heeled shoes, and flirted fans emblazoned with the history of Pamela. Nevertheless, such was the respect commanded by their thorough gentility, their benevolence and their courtesy, that the very boys in the streets forgot to laugh at women so blameless and so kind. An old house-keeper, who had been their waiting-maid for half a lifetime, partook of their popularity. Their brother and his wife inhabited a beautiful place in the neighbourhood (afterwards bequeathed to the celebrated Whiggish wit, Joseph Jekyl), and until the sisters approached the age of eighty, nothing could be smoother than the current of their calm and virtuous life. At that period Mrs. Theodosia, the elder, sank into imbecility, and Mrs. Frances, a woman of considerable ability and feeling, broke all at once into incurable madness. Both were pronounced to be harmless, and were left in their own house, with two or three female servants, under the care of the favourite attendant who had lived with them so long. For a considerable time no change took place; but one cold winter day, their faithful nurse left her younger charge sitting quietly by the parlour fire, and had not been gone many minutes before she was recalled by sudden screams, and found the poor maniac enveloped in flames. It was supposed that she had held her cambric handkerchief to air within the fireguard, and had thus ignited her apron and

other parts of her dress. The old servant, with a true woman's courage, caught her in her arms, and was so fearfully burnt in the vain endeavour to extinguish the flames, that she expired even before her mistress, who lingered many days in dreadful agony, but without any return of recollection. The surviving sister, happily unconscious of the catastrophe, died at last of mere old age. This tragedy occurred not many years after the death of Cowper.

THE CASTAWAY.

Obscurest night involved the sky ;
 The Atlantic billows roared,
 When such a destined wretch as I
 Washed headlong from on board,
 Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
 His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
 Than he with whom he went,
 Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
 With warmer wishes sent.
 He loved them both, but both in vain,
 Nor him beheld nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine
 Expert to swim he lay ;
 Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
 Or courage die away ;
 He waged with death a lasting strife,
 Supported by despair of life.

He shouted : nor his friends had failed
 To check the vessel's course,
 But so the furious blast prevailed
 That pitiless perforse,
 They left their outcast mate behind,
 And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford,
 And such as storms allow,
 The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
 Delayed not to bestow.
 But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore
 Whate'er they gave should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
 Their haste himself condemn,
 Aware that flight in such a sea
 Alone could rescue them ;
 Yet bitter felt it still to die
 Deserted and his friends so nigh.

He long survives who lives an hour
 In ocean self-upheld :
 And so long he with unspent power
 His destiny repelled ;
 And ever as the minutes flew
 Entreated help, or cried Adieu !

At length his transient respite past
 His comrades, who before
 Had heard his voice in every blast,
 Could catch the sound no more.
 For then, by toil subdued, he drank
 The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him ; but the page
 Of narrative sincere
 That tells his name, his worth, his age,
 Is wet with Anson's tear ;
 And tears by bards or heroes shed
 Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not to dream,
 Descanting on his fate,
 To give the melancholy theme
 A more enduring date.
 But misery still delights to trace
 Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
 No light propitious shone ;
 When snatched from all effectual aid
 We perished each alone ;
 But I beneath a rougher sea
 And whelmed in deeper gulps than he.

Very different, yet scarcely less melancholy, was the destiny of the writer of the following sonnet, called by Coleridge the finest in our language. Most remarkable it undoubtedly is, not merely for the grandeur of the thought, but for the beauty of the execution. In reading these lines, it is difficult to believe that the author (Blanco White) was not only born and educated in Spain, but wrote English very imperfectly until he was turned of thirty.

TO NIGHT.

Mysterious Night ! when our first parent knew
 Thee from report divine and heard thy name,
 Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
 This glorious canopy of light and blue ?
 Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew
 Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame
 Hesperus with the host of Heaven came,
 And, lo ! creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
 Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who could find
 Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed...
 That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind !
 Why do we then shun death with anxious strife ?
 If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life ?

Most different again is the following quaint sonnet, taken from a series of sixty-three, all addressed to his mistress, and called by Drayton "Ideas." The turn of the language is exceedingly dramatic.

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part !
 Nay, I have done ; you get no more of me ;
 And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
 That thus so clearly I myself can free.
 Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
 And when we meet at any time again
 Be it not seen on either of our brows
 That we one jot of former love retain.
 Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
 When his pulse failing Passion speechless lies,
 When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
 And Innocence is closing up his eyes ;
 Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
 From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

The concluding poem of this paper, although in a very different style, resembles its companions in the one grand quality of being amongst the best, if not the very best, of its class, at once a promise and a performance. That promise has been amply redeemed. A singular honour befel our English Apollo, that of being recited at the foot of the statue (then still in the Louvre), by no less a person than Mrs. Siddons herself. The grace and harmony of the verse are worthy of such a distinction.

THE BELVIDERE APOLLO.

An Oxford Prize Poem.

Heard ye the arrow hurtle in the sky ?
 Heard ye the dragon monster's deathful cry ?
 In settled majesty of fierce disdain,
 Proud of his might, yet scornful of the slain,
 The heavenly archer stands ;—no human birth,
 No perishable denizen of earth ;
 Youth blooms immortal in his beardless face,
 A god in strength with more than godlike grace ;
 All, all divine,—no struggling muscle glows,
 Through heaving vein no mantling life-blood flows,
 But animate with deity alone,
 In deathless glory lives the breathing stone.

Bright kindling with a conqueror's stern delight,
 His keen eye tracks the arrow's fateful flight;
 Burns his indignant cheek with vengeful fire,
 And his lip quivers with insulting ire :
 Firm fixed his tread, yet light, as when on high
 He walks the impalpable and pathless sky :
 The rich luxuriance of his hair, confined
 In graceful ringlets, wantons on the wind
 That lifts in sport his mantle's drooping fold,
 Proud to display that form of faultless mould.

Mighty Ephesian ! with an eagle's flight
 Thy proud soul mounted through the fields of light,
 Viewed the bright concave of Heaven's blest abode,
 And the cold marble leapt to life a God :
 Contagious awe through breathless myriads ran,
 And nations bowed before the work of man.
 For mild he seemed as in Elysian bowers
 Wasting in careless ease the joyous hours ;
 Haughty, as bards have sung, with princely sway
 Curbing the fierce flame-breathing steeds of day ;
 Beauteous as vision seen in dreamy sleep
 By holy maid, on Delphi's haunted steep,
 Mid the dim twilight of the laurel grove
 Too fair to worship, too divine to love.

Yet on that form, in wild delirious trance,
 With more than reverence gazed the Maid of France.
 Day after day the love-sick dreamer stood
 With him alone, nor thought it solitude ;
 To cherish grief, her last, her dearest care ;
 Her one fond hope—to perish of despair.
 Oft as the shifting light her sight beguiled,
 Blushing she shrank, and thought the marble smiled ;
 Oft breathless listening heard, or seemed to hear—
 A voice of music melt upon her ear.
 Slowly she waned, and, cold and senseless grown,
 Closed her dim eyes, herself benumbed to stone.
 Yet love in death a sickly strength supplied,
 Once more she gazed, then feebly smiled and died.

It is remarkable that Dean Milman's professional residences have kept close to the great river of England : his first curacy at Ealing, his vicarage at Reading, his Oxford professorship, his stall at Westminster, the deanery of St. Paul's. Well ! there are other ecclesiastical dwellings on the banks of the Thames : Rochester, Fulham, Lambeth ; who knows ! One thing is quite certain, go where he may, he will find respect and welcome, and leave behind him admiration and regret.

XXXIV.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

VISIT TO UFTON COURT.

W. C. BENNETT.

FIFTY years ago, our Berkshire valleys abounded in old Catholic houses, to which tradition usually assigned subterranean communication with neighbouring nunneries, in the case of abbeys or priories, of which, so far as I know, none hath ever come to light ; or, if the mansions had been secular, secret hiding-places for priests during the religious persecution (sad words to join) of the seventeenth century, especially during the times that preceded and followed Guy Fawkes's unaccomplished crime, and the frightful delusion known by the name of the Popish Plot. That tradition was right enough there, and that the oppressed Catholics did resort to every measure permitted to their weakness, for the purpose of concealing the priests to whom and to their peculiar rites and ceremonies they clung as human nature does cling to that which is unrighteously persecuted, there exists no sort of doubt.—In an old house which my own father took down belonging to that time, a small chamber was discovered, to which there was no entrance except by a trap-door cunningly devised in the oak flooring of a large bed-chamber ; and similar places of concealment, sometimes behind a panel, sometimes in a chimney, sometimes in the roof, have come to light in other manor-houses. Now they are nearly all levelled with the ground, these picturesque dwellings of our ancestors ; the ancestral trees are following fast ; and we who love to linger round the grey walls or to ramble amidst the mossy trunks are left to remember and to deplore.

One, however, still remains amongst us, thanks to the good taste, the good feeling, and perhaps a little to the abundant wealth of the present proprietor ; and that one is luckily the most interesting of all. I speak of Ufton Court, where Arabella Fermor, the Belinda of "The Rape of the Lock," spent her married life ; where she dwelt in honour and repute, receiving in the hereditary mansion of the Perkinses the wits of that Augustan age—Pope, Steele, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke ;

where she reared four goodly sons, became a widow, and was finally buried in the little village church. There her monument may still be seen amongst many others of her husband's family, and her name is still shown with laudable pride and interest in that most levelling of books, in whose pages riches and poverty, beauty and deformity, stand side by side—the Parish Register.

To this old house I rarely fail to conduct such of my visitors as happen to be poets ; and that one who deserves that high title accompanied me thither not very long ago will be inferred, I think, by most of those who read the verses that conclude this paper.

The day was one of those between late May and early June—the May of the old style, the May of the poets ; a day of breeze and of sunshine. Our road wound through close woody lanes, fragrant with the pearly flowers of the hawthorn, and the opening leaves of the oak just disclosing their silky folds of yellowish brown ; then across the village-green, gay with happy children let loose from school ; then through the little brook where the road dips so prettily ; then beside the trickling rill flowing down the hill, as we mounted up, until at last we emerged from the shade of the tall trees and the steep banks of the narrow lane into the full flood of the sunlight, shining in all its glory upon the broad table-land of Mortimer Common.

Never did I see that beautiful spot so beautiful, the fine short turf, exquisite in its tender verdure, was, except in occasional stripes and patches, literally encrusted with the golden-blossomed gorse, loading the air with its heavy odour ; bright ponds of clear water reflected the deep blue sky ; all around in the distance lay cultivated valleys, woods, churches, villages, towns ; and in the foreground one or two groups of old, dark, fantastic firs gave something of a wild rugged relief to a landscape almost too gorgeous.

Traversing the common, we plunged again into a labyrinth of lanes. This time, however, we passed between fir plantations, mingled with young birches of green leaf and silver bark, with blossomed hawthorn and waving broom ; the golden gorse creeping into every nook and corner, and seeming to reflect the yellow sunshine as the water had reflected the blue sky. At length we arrived at the gates opening upon the

broad approach to Ufton Court ; an approach still imposing although the noble double avenue that once adorned it has long fallen under the woodman's axe.

The situation of the house is so commanding that it would be difficult to deprive it of its stateliness and dignity. It stands on the brow of a hill which slopes abruptly from the broad terrace that surrounds two sides of the mansion, and overhangs an old-fashioned garden once elaborately laid out, down into a deep valley, which, with the stream that creeps along the enamelled bottom, forms a beautiful bit of woodland scenery—beautiful and most extensive ; the wood climbing up to the top of the opposite hill, and spreading on every side until it is lost in the distance.

On the lawn in front of the mansion are some magnificent elms, splendid both in size and form, and one gigantic broad-browed oak—the real oak of the English forest—that must have seen many centuries.

To the right the lawn sweeps down a steep descent to a chain of fish-ponds, communicating with each other, as was usual in large country-houses before the Reformation, especially when so far inland ; and, beyond the fish-ponds, a winding road leads through the wood past a clear well overhung with trees, that almost tempts you to taste the waters of the fountain, until in the depth of the valley we cross a one-arched bridge, and either follow the road up the long acclivity or diverge into the recesses of the woodland, just now interspersed with piles of faggots and a few fallen trees, and purple with the fragrant bells of the wild hyacinth. By the roadside we found a rarer flower, the crimson woodvetch, which, to our astonishment, we again discovered amongst the grasses upon the terrace—of old as free from all vegetation as the pavement of the hall ; doubtless some bird had carried the seed from its native home among the trees.

The house itself is an extensive and picturesque erection, certainly not later than the age of Elizabeth, probably much earlier. The projecting wings, with their gables and pinnacles, are borne out by a large and curious porch, also projecting, with two wide seats on either side, so that, although partly open below, it admits of a charming, lightsome lady's room, with three windows, built over it. Tall clusters of twisted chimneys break the line of the roof. The upper stories, with

their quaintly-carved beams and corbels, project one over the other, and are terminated by little gables and pinnacles, each with its narrow casement, all along the front. Tall, narrow casements indeed—the small panes forming a graceful pattern of octagons and diamonds—prevail on every side ; and the door, of heaviest oak, studded with prodigious nails, would almost resist an ancient battering-ram or a modern petard.

On entering the mansion, we found cause to conjecture that these straitened windows and this iron-shod door were perhaps but needful precautions in those days of terror.

The two lower floors offer nothing to view beyond the black and white marble pavement, the decorated ceilings, and the carved oaken panels proper to a large manorial residence of the times of the Tudors. But, on ascending the broad staircase to the third story, we find at every step traces of the shifts to which the unhappy intolerance of the times subjected those who adhered firmly to the proscribed faith, as during two centuries, and until the race was extinct, was the proud distinction of the family of Perkins.

The walls are evidently pierced throughout by a concealed passage, or very probably passages ; leading, it is presumed, to a shaft in the cellar, still visible, from whence another passage led under the terrace into the garden, and through that to the woods, where, doubtless, places of refuge or means of escape were held ready for the fugitives. As many as a dozen carefully-masked openings into dark hiding-places, varying in extent and size, have been discovered in this story : no doubt they were connected one with the other, although the clue of the labyrinth is wanting. About twenty years ago a larger chamber, entered by a trap, was also accidentally laid open. A narrow ladder led into this gloomy retreat, and the only things found there were most significant —two petronels and a small crucifix.

A shelving apartment in the roof had been used as a chapel ; and, in a small room adjoining, a triangular opening, too small to conceal a man, has been effected with more than ordinary care. It was probably used to conceal the vestments and the plate used in the mass. The little door is so thickly lined with wood, that the most skilful sounder of panels might knock for ever without detecting the slightest hollow sound, and it fastens itself when closed by a curious and

complicated wooden bolt. One would fancy that Sir Walter must have seen Ufton Court when he wrote "Woodstock."

Fifty years ago a Catholic priest was the sole inhabitant of this interesting mansion. His friend, the late Mrs. Lenoir, Christopher Smart's daughter, whose books when taken up, one does not care to put down again, wrote some verses to the great oak. Her nieces, whom I am proud to call my friends, possess many reliques of that lovely Arabella Fermor, of whom Pope, in the charming dedication to the most charming of his poems, said that "the character of Belinda, as it was now managed, resembled her in nothing but beauty." Amongst these reliques are her rosary, and a portrait, taken when she was twelve or thirteen years of age. The face is most interesting: a high, broad forehead; dark eyes, richly fringed and deeply set; a straight nose, pouting lips, and a short chin finely rounded. The dress is dark and graceful, with a little white turned back about the neck and the loose sleeves. Altogether I never saw a more charming, girlish portrait, with so much of present beauty, and so true a promise of more—of that order, too, high and intellectual, which great poets love. Her last surviving son died childless in 1769, and the estate passed into another family.

Yet another interest belongs to Ufton, not indeed to the Court, but to the Rectory. Poor Blanco White wrote under that roof his first work, the well-known "Doblado's Letters;" and the late excellent rector, Mr. Bishop, in common with the no less excellent Lord Holland and Archbishop Whately, remained through all that tried and alienated other hearts, his fast friend to his last hour.

Let me now speak of my companion.

Of all writers the one who has best understood, best painted, best felt infant nature, is my dear and valued friend, Mr. Bennett. We see at once that it is not only a charming and richly-gifted poet who is describing childish beauty, but a young father writing from his heart. So young indeed is he in reality and in appearance, that he was forced to produce a shoemaker's bill, for certain little blue kid slippers before he could convince an incredulous critic (I believe poor Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn-law Rhymers) that Baby May was really his own child, and not an imaginary personage invented for the nonce; and yet Greenwich can tell how much this young

ardent mind, aided by kindred spirits, has done in the way of baths and washhouses, and schools, and lectures, and libraries, and mechanics' institutes, to further the great cause of progress, mental and bodily. So well do strength and tenderness of character go together, and so fine a thing is the union of activity with thought.

“Baby May” is amongst the most popular of Mr. Bennett’s lyrics, and amongst the most original, as that which is perfectly true to nature can hardly fail to be.

BABY MAY.

Cheeks as soft as July peaches—
Lips whose velvet scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness—round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise—
Minutes filled with shadeless gladness—
Minutes just as brimmed with sadness—
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes,
Lights and shadows, swiftly born
Then on wind-swept Autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion,
Making every limb all motion,
Catching up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers—straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kicking up and straining risings,
Mother’s ever new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under,
Tiny scorns of smiled reproving
That have more of love than lovings,
Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness that we prize such sinning,
Breakings dire of plates and glasses,
Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that’s able
To be caught from tray or table,
Silences—small meditations
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light my guessing,
Slumbers—such sweet angel-seemings
That we’d ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we’d always have thee waking,

Wealth for which we know no measure,
 Pleasure high above all pleasure,
 Gladness brimming over gladness,
 Joy in care—delight in sadness,
 Loveliness beyond completeness,
 Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
 Beauty all that beauty may be,
 That's May Bennett—that's my baby.

This is another lyric in the same key.

TO A LOCKET.

Oh casket of dear fancies—
 Oh little case of gold—
 What rarest wealth of memories
 Thy tiny round will hold;
 With this first curl of baby's
 In thy small charge will live
 All thoughts that all her little life
 To memory can give.

Oh prize its silken softness,
 Within its amber round
 What worlds of sweet rememberings
 Will still by us be found;
 The weak shrill cry so blessing
 The curtained room of pain,
 With every since-felt feeling
 To us 't will bring again.

'T will mind us of her lying
 In rest soft-pillowed deep,
 While, hands the candle shading,
 We stole upon her sleep—
 Of many a blessed moment
 Her little rest above
 We hung in marvelling stillness—
 In ecstasy of love.

'T will mind us, radiant sunshine
 For all our shadowed days,
 Of all her baby wonderings,
 Of all her little ways,
 Of all her tiny shoutings,
 Of all her starts and fears
 And sudden mirths out-gleaming
 Through eyes yet hung with tears.

There's not a care—a watching—
 A hope—a laugh—a fear
 Of all her little bringing
 But we shall find it here;
 Then tiny golden warder,
 Oh safely ever hold
 This glossy silken memory,
 This little curl of gold.

Here are some epitaphs for infants, of great sweetness and tenderness.

EPITAPHS FOR INFANTS.

I.

Here the gusts of wild March blow
But in murmurs faint and low ;
Ever here when Spring is green
Be the brightest verdure seen—
And when June's in field and glade.
Here be ever freshest shade ;
Here hued Autumn's latest stay,
Latest call the flowers away ;
And when Winter's shrilling by
Here its snows the warmest lie ;
For a little life is here,
Hid in earth for ever dear,
And this grassy heap above
Sorrow broods and weeping love.

II.

On this little grassy mound
Never be the darnel found ;
Ne'er be venom'd nettle seen
On this little heap of green ;
For the little lost one here
Was too sweet for aught of fear,
Aught of harm to harbour nigh
This green spot where she must lie ;
So be nought but sweetness found
On this little grassy mound.

III.

Here in gentle pity, Spring,
Let thy sweetest voices sing ;
Nightingale, be here thy song
Charmed by grief to linger long—
Here the thrush with longest stay
Pipe its speckled song to day—
And the blackbird warble shrill
All its passions latest still ;
Still the old gray tower above
Her small rest, the swallow love,
And through all June's honied hours
Booming bees hum in its flowers,
And when comes the eve's cold gray
Murmuring gnats unresting play
Weave, while round the beetle's flight
Drones across the shadowing night ;
For the sweetness dreaming here
Was a gladness to the year,
And the sad months all should bring
Dirges o'er her sleep to sing.

IV.

Haunter of the opening year,
 Ever be the primrose here ;
 Whitest daisies deck the spot,
 Pansies and forget-me-not,
 Fairest things that earliest fly,
 Sweetness blooming but to die ;
 For this blossom, o'er whose fall
 Sorrow sighs, was fair as all,
 But, alas, as frail as they,
 All as quickly fled away.

These four stanzas, on a subject so hackneyed that many writers would have shrunk from attempting it, would make four charming pictures.

THE SEASONS.

A blue-eyed child that sits amid the noon,
 O'erhung with a laburnum's drooping sprays,
 Singing her little songs, while softly round
 Along the grass the chequered sunshine plays.

All beauty that is throned in womanhood
 Pacing a summer garden's fountained walks,
 That stoops to smooth a glossy spaniel down
 To hide her flushing cheek from one who talks.

A happy mother with her fair-faced girls,
 In whose sweet Spring again her youth she sees,
 With shout and dance and laugh and bound and song,
 Stripping an Autumn orchard's laden trees.

An aged woman in a wintry room,—
 Frost on the pane, without the whirling snow—
 Reading old letters of her far-off youth,
 Of sorrows past and joys of long ago.

The next specimen shows one of Mr. Bennett's strongest characteristics ; his sincere sympathy with the privations of the working classes, especially the privations that shut them out from natural beauty.

THE SEMPSTRESS TO HER MIGNONETTE.

I love that box of mignonette,
 Though worthless in your eyes,
 Above your choicest hot-house flowers
 My mignonette I prize—
 Thank heaven not yet I've learned on that
 A money worth to set—
 'T is priceless as the thoughts it brings,
 My box of mignonette.

I know my own sweet mignonette
 Is neither strange nor rare,
 Your garden flaunters burn with hues
 That it may never wear ;
 Yet on your garden's rarest blooms
 No eyes were ever set
 With more delight than mine on yours,
 My box of mignonette.

Why do I prize my mignonette
 That lights my window there ?
 It adds a pleasure to delight—
 It steals a weight from care—
 What happy daylight dreams it brings—
 Can I not half forget
 My long long hours of weary work
 With you, my mignonette.

It tells of May, my mignonette,
 And as I see it bloom,
 I think the green bright pleasant Spring
 Comes freshly through my room ;
 Our narrow court is dark and close,
 Yet when my eyes you met,
 Wide fields lay stretching from my sight,
 My box of mignonette.

What talks it of, my mignonette,
 To me it babbles still
 Of woodland banks of primroses,
 Of heath and breezy hill—
 Through country lanes and daisied fields—
 Through paths with morning wet—
 Again I trip as when a girl,
 Through you, my mignonette.

For this I love my mignonette,
 My window garden small,
 That country thoughts and scents and sounds
 Around me loves to call—
 For this though low in rich men's thoughts
 Your worth and love be set,
 I bless you, pleasure of the poor,
 My own sweet mignonette.

I add "Ariadne" to show how Mr. Bennett can strike the classic lyre.

ARIADNE.

Morn rose on Naxos,—golden dewy morn,
 Climbing its eastern cliffs with gleaming light,
 Purpling each inland peak and dusky gorge
 Of the gray distance,—morn, on lowland slopes,
 Of olive-ground and vines and yellowing corn,
 Orchard and flowery pasture, white with kine,

On forest—hill-side cot, and rounding sea,
And the still tent of Theseus by the shore.

Morn rose on Naxos—chill and freshening morn,
Nor yet the unbreathing air a twitter heard
From eave or bough,—nor yet a blue smoke rose
From glade or misty vale, or far-off town;
One only sign of life, a dusky sail,
Stole dark afar across the distant sea
Flying; all else unmoved in stillness lay
Beneath the silence of the brightening heavens,
Nor sound was heard to break the slumbrous calm,
Save the soft lapse of waves along the strand.

A white form from the tent,—a glance,—a cry.
Where art thou, Theseus!—Theseus! Theseus! where?
Why hast thou stolen thus with earliest dawn,
Forth from thy couch—forth from these faithless arms,
That even in slumber should have clasped thee still?
Truant! ah me! and hast thou learned to fly
So early from thy Ariadne's love?
Where art thou? Is it well to fright me thus,—
To scare me for a moment with the dread
Of one abandon'd? Art thou in the woods
With all that could have told me where thou art?
Cruel! and could'st thou not have left me one,
Ere this to have laughed away my idle fears?
He could have told thee all—the start—the shriek—
The pallid face, with which I found thee gone,
And furnished laughter for thy glad return;
But thus to leave me, cruel! thus alone!
There is no sound of horns among the hills,
No shouts that tell thy track or bay the boar.
O fearful stillness! O that one would speak!
O would that I were fronting wolf or pard
But by thy side this moment! so strange fear
Possesses me, O love! apart from thee.
The galley gone! Ye Gods! it is not gone!
Here, by this rock it lay but yesternight!
Gone! through this track its keel slid down the shore;
And I slept calmly as it cleft the sea!
Gone! gone! where gone?—that sail! 'tis his! 'tis his!
Return, O Theseus! Theseus, love! return!

Thou wilt return! Thou dost but try my love!
Thou wilt return to make my foolish fears
Thy jest! Return, and I will laugh with thee!
Return! return! And canst thou hear my shrieks,
Nor heed my cry? And wouldst thou have me weep?
Weep! I that wept—white with wild fear—the while
Thou slew'st the abhorred monster! If it be
Thou takest pleasure in these bitter tears,
Come back, and I will weep myself away—
A streaming Niobe—to win thy smiles!

O stony heart ! why wilt thou wring me thus ?
O heart more cold unto my shrilling cries
Than these wild hills that wail to thee, return,
Than all these island rocks that shriek, return.
Come back !—Thou seest me rend this blinding hair ;
Hast thou not sworn each tress thou didst so prize,
That sight of home, and thy gray father's face,
Were less a joy to thee, and lightlier held ?
Thy sail ! thy sail ! O do my watery eyes
Take part with thee, so loved ! to crush me down !
Gone ! gone ! and wilt thou—wilt thou not return ?
Heartless, unfearing the just Gods, wilt thou,
Theseus ! my lord ! my love ! desert me thus ?
Thus leave me, stranger in this strange wild land,
Friendless, afar from all I left for thee,
Crete, my old home, and my ancestral halls,
My father's love, and the remembered haunts
Of childhood,—all that knew me—all I knew—
All—all—woe ! woe ! that I shall know no more.
Why didst thou lure me, craftiest, from my home ?
There if, thy love grown cold, thou thus hadst fled,
I had found comfort in fond words and smiles
Familiar, and the pity of my kin,
Tears wept with mine—tears wept by loving eyes,
That had washed out thy traces from my heart,
Perchance, in years, had given me back to joy.
O that thy steps had never trodden Crete !
O that these eyes had never on thee fed !
O that, weak heart ! I ne'er had looked my love,
Or, looking, thou hadst thrust it back with hate !
Did I not save thee ? I ? Was it for this,
Despite Crete's hate—despite my father's wrath,
Perchance to slay me, that I ventured all
For thee—for thee—forgetting all for thee !
Thou know'st it all,—who knows it if not thou,
Save the just Gods—the Gods who hear my cry,
And mutter vengeance o'er thy flying head,
Forsworn ! And, lo ! on thy accursed track
Rush the dread furies ; lo ! afar I see
The hoary Ægeus, watching for his son,
His son that nears him still with hastening oars,
Unknown, that nears him but to dash him down,
Moaning, to darkness and the dreadful shades,
The while, thy grief wails after him in vain ;
And, lo, again the good Gods glad my sight
With vengeance : blood again, thy blood, I see
Streaming ;—who bids Hyppolytus depart
But thou—thou, sword of lustful Phædra's hate
Against thy boy—thy son—thy fair-haired boy ;
I see the ivory chariot whirl him on—
The maddened horses down the rocky way
Dashing—the roaring monster in their path ;

And plates and ivory splinters of the car,
 And blood and limbs, sprung from thee, crushed and torn,
 Poseidon scatters down the shrieking shores ;
 And thou too late—too late, bewail'st, in vain,
 Thy blindness and thy hapless darling's fate,
 And think'st of me, abandoned, and my woe ;
 Thou who didst show no pity, to the Gods
 Shrieking for pity, that my vengeful cries
 Drag thee not down unto the nether gloom,
 To endless tortures and undying woe.
 Dread Gods ! I know these things shall surely be !
 But other, wilder whispers throng my ears,
 And in my thought a fountain of sweet hope
 Mingles its gladness with my lorn despair.
 Lo ! wild flushed faces reel before mine eyes.
 And furious revels, dances, and fierce glee,
 Are round me,—tossing arms and leaping forms,
 Skin-clad and horny-hoofed, and hands that clash
 Shrill cymbals, and the stormy joy of flutes
 And horns, and blare of trumpets, and all hues
 Of Iris' watery bow, on bounding nymphs,
 Vine-crowned and Thrysus-sceptred, and one form,
 God of the roaring triumph, on a car
 Golden and jewel-lusted, carved and bossed,
 As by Hephaestus, shouting, rolls along,
 Joeund and panther-drawn, and through the sun,
 Down, through the glaring splendour, with wild bound,
 Leaps, as he nears me, and a mighty cup,
 Dripping with odorous nectar, to my lips
 Is raised, and mad sweet mirth—frenzy divine
 Is in my veins,—hot love burns through mine eyes,
 And o'er the roar and rout I roll along,
 Throned by the God, and lifted by his love
 Unto forgetfulness of mortal pains,
 Up to the prayers and praise and awe of earth.

Much may be expected from a young poet who has already done so well ; all the more that he is a man of business, and that literature is with him a staff and not a crutch.

To return a moment to Ufton Court.

I am indebted to my admirable friend Mrs. Hughes for the account of another hiding-place, in which the interest is insured by that charm of charms—an unsolved and insoluble mystery.

On some alterations being projected in a large mansion in Scotland, belonging to the late Sir George Warrender, the architect, after examining, and, so to say, studying the house, declared that there was a space in the centre for which there was no accounting, and that there must certainly be a con-

cealed chamber. Neither master nor servant had ever heard of such a thing, and the assertion was treated with some scorn. The architect, however, persisted, and at last proved, by the sure test of measurement and by comparison with the rooms in an upper story, that the space he had spoken of did exist; and as no entrance of any sort could be discovered from the surrounding chambers, it was resolved to make an incision in the wall. The experiment proved the architect to have been correct in his calculations. A large and lofty apartment was disclosed, richly and completely furnished as a bedchamber; a large four-post bed, spread with blankets, counterpanes, and the finest sheets, was prepared for instant occupation. The very wax-lights in the candlesticks stood ready for lighting. The room was heavily hung and carpeted as if to deaden sound, and was, of course, perfectly dark. No token was found to indicate the intended occupant, for it did not appear to have been used, and the general conjecture was that the refuge had been prepared for some unfortunate Jacobite in the '15, who had either fallen into the hands of the Government or had escaped from the kingdom; while the few persons to whom the secret had necessarily been intrusted had died off without taking any one into their confidence—a discretion and fidelity which correspond with many known traits of Scottish character in both rebellions, and were eminently displayed during the escape of Charles Edward.

XXXV.

IRISH AUTHORS.

GERALD GRIFFIN.

L BIOGRAPHY, although to me the most delightful reading in the world, is too frequently synonymous with tragedy, especially the biography of poets. What else are the last two volumes of "Lockhart's Life of Scott"? What else, all the more for its wild and whirling gaiety, the entire "Life of Byron"? But the book that, above any other, speaks to me of the trials, the sufferings, the broken heart of a man of genius is that "Life of Gerald Griffin," written by a brother worthy of him, which precedes the only edition of his col-

lected works. The author of "The Collegians" is so little known in England, that I may be pardoned for sketching the few events of an existence marked only by high aims and bitter disappointments. His parents were poor Irish gentry, with taste and cultivation unusual in their class and country ; and all of his early youth that he could steal from Greek and Latin was spent in the far dearer and more absorbing occupation of sketching secretly drama after drama, or in dreaming sweet dreams of triumphs to come, as he lay floating in his little boat on the broad bosom of the Shannon, which flowed past his happy home. When he was about seventeen, the elder branches of his family emigrated to Canada, leaving him to the care of his brother, Dr. Griffin, who removed to Adare, near Limerick. It was proposed that he also should follow the medical profession. But this destination was little suited to the cherished visions of the young poet ; and about two years after he set off gaily for London, with "Gisippus," and I know not how many other plays in his pocket, for his only resource, and his countryman John Banim for his only friend. He was not yet twenty, poor boy ! had hardly left his father's roof, and he set out for London full of spirits and of hope to make his fortune by the stage. Now we all know what "Gisippus" is—the story of a great benefit, a foul ingratitude, suffering heaped upon suffering, wrong upon wrong, avenged in the last scene by such a pardon, such a reconciliation as would draw tears from the stoniest heart that ever sate in a theatre. We all know the beauty of "Gisippus" now ; for after the author's death, that very play, in Mr. Macready's hands, achieved perhaps one of the purest successes of the modern drama. But during Gerald Griffin's life it produced nothing but mortifications innumerable and unspeakable. The play and the poet were tossed unread and unheard from actor to actor, from manager to manager, until hope fainted within him, and the theatre was abandoned at once and for ever.

During this long agony he quarrelled, in some moment of susceptibility, long repented and speedily atoned, with his true friend Banim ; and went about the huge wilderness, London, an unknown, solitary lad, seeking employment amongst the booksellers, fighting the battle of unfriended and unrecognised talent as bravely as ever it was fought, and

was all but starved in the contest, as Otway and Chatterton had been before him. The production of "The Collegians," the very best tale of what has been termed "The Irish School," averted this catastrophe. But even after the "Collegians," which O'Connell delighted in calling his favourite novel, the struggle, often a losing struggle, seems to have continued. Bitter sufferings ooze out. He speaks of himself in some most affecting stanzas, as doomed to die whilst his powers are still unacknowledged :—

"With this feeling upon me, all feverish and glowing,
I rushed up the rugged way panting to fame,
I snatched at my laurels while yet they were growing,
And won for my guerdon *the half of a name.*"

For the next dozen years he appears to have lived an anxious and unsatisfactory life, partly in arduous and obscure drudgery, working for different booksellers at the several series of "The Munster Festivals," "The Duke of Monmouth," and other tales, partly sharing the happier retirement of his affectionate relations in the county Limerick. But in London, in spite of his fine genius, his high and sterling qualities, he seems to have remained friendless and unknown. Partly, perhaps, this was the fault of a shy and sensitive temperament. He says himself :—

"I have a heart. I'd live
And die for him whose worth I knew ;
But could not clasp his hand, and give
My full heart forth as talkers do.
And they who loved me, the kind few,
Believed me changed in heart and tone,
And left me while it burned as true,
To live alone, to live alone."

And so he laboured on ; working for uncertain remuneration with diminished hope, and with (as we are suffered to perceive) the shadow of an unfortunate attachment dimming the faint sunshine that was left, until little by little his courage seems to have failed him, and, in the year 1838, while only thirty-four years of age, he resolved to join the Society of Christian Brethren at Cork. It is an institution half monastic, half educational, consisting, no doubt, of pious and excellent persons, and fitted to do good service among the peasantry of Ireland. But I cannot help doubting whether the companionship or the occupation were exactly

that best suited to Gerald Griffin. One of the old Benedictine abbeys, where the consolations of religion were blended with the pursuits of learning, where the richly-adorned chapel adjoined the richly-stored library, would have done better. At Cork, his employment was to teach young children their letters: and one day a mendicant from his own county craving relief, and he moneyless, according to the rule of the order, proposing to bestow his alms in the form of a little gold seal, the only trinket he had retained, the permission to do so was refused. After this it is no surprise to find that the feverish disorders, to which he was constitutionally subject, recurred more frequently. In the year 1840, his kind brother, Dr. Griffin, was sent for to attend his sick-bed, and arrived just in time to receive his last sigh. Then came the triumphant representation of "Gisippus," the only one of his plays that he had not destroyed on entering the Christian Brethren, just to show what a dramatist had been let die.

His lyrics seem to me almost unrivalled for the truth, purity, and tenderness of the sentiment. This is high praise, but I subjoin a few specimens which I think will bear it out:—

]

Gilli ma chree,
 Sit down by me,
 We now are joined and ne'er shall sever,
 This hearth's our own,
 Our hearts are one,
 And peace is ours for ever.

When I was poor
 Your father's door
 Was closed against your constant lover;
 With care and pain
 I tried in vain
 My fortunes to recover:
 I said, to other lands I'll roam
 Where Fate may smile on me, love!
 I said, Farewell, my own old home!
 And I said farewell to thee, love!
 Sing Gilli ma chree, &c.

I might have said,
 My mountain maid,
 Come live with me, your own true lover;
 I know a spot
 A silent cot,

Your friends can ne'er discover,
 Where gently flows the waveless tide
 By one small garden only,
 Where the heron waves his wings so wide,
 And the linnet sings so lonely.
 Sing Gilli ma chree, &c.

I might have said,
 My mountain maid,
 A father's right was never given
 True hearts to curse
 With tyrant force
 That have been blest in heaven !
 But then I said, in after years,
 When thoughts of home shall find her,
 My love may mourn with secret tears
 Her friends thus left behind her.
 Sing Gilli ma chree, &c.

Oh, no, I said,
 My own dear maid,
 For me, though all forlorn for ever,
 That heart of thine
 Shall ne'er repine
 O'er slighted duty, never !
 From home and thee though wandering far
 A dreary fate be mine, love,
 I'd rather live in endless war
 Than buy my peace with thine, love !
 Sing Gilli ma chree, &c.

Far, far away,
 By night and day,
 I toiled to win a golden treasure,
 And golden gains
 Repaid my pains
 In fair and shining measure.
 I sought again my native land ;
 Thy father welcomed me, love :
 I poured my gold into his hand,
 And my guerdon found in thee, love !
 Sing Gilli ma chree,
 Sit down by me,
 We now are joined and ne'er shall sever ;
 This hearth's our own,
 Our hearts are one,
 And peace is ours for ever.

II.

The Mie-na-mallah * now is past,
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 And I must leave my home at last,
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !

* The Honeymoon.

I look into my father's eyes,
 I hear my mother's parting sighs,—
 Ah ! fool to pine for other ties !
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !

This evening they must sit alone,
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 They'll talk of me when I am gone,
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 Who now will cheer my lonely sire
 When toil and care his heart shall tire ?
 My chair is empty by the fire !
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !

How sunny looks my pleasant home,
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 Those flowers for me shall never bloom,
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 I seek new friends, and I am told
 That they are rich in lands and gold.
 Ah ! will they love me like the old ?
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !

Farewell, dear friends ! we meet no more !
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 My husband's horse is at the door !
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !
 Ah, love ! ah, love ! be kind to me,
 For by this breaking heart you see,
 How dearly I have purchased thee !
 O wirra-sthru ! O wirra-sthru !

III.

Old times ! old times ! the gay old times,
 When I was young and free,
 And heard the merry Easter chimes
 Under the sally tree.
 My Sunday palm beside me placed,
 My cross upon my hand,
 A heart at rest within my breast,
 And sunshine on the land !
 Old times ! old times !

It is not that my fortunes flee,
 Nor that my cheek is pale,
 I mourn whene'er I think of thee,
 My darling native vale.
 A wiser head I have I know
 Than when I loitered there,
 But in my wisdom there is woe,
 And in my knowledge care.
 Old times ! old times !

I 've lived to know my share of joy,
 To feel my share of pain,
 To learn that friendship's self can cloy,
 To love and love in vain.
 To feel a pang and wear a smile,
 To tire of other climes,
 To like my own unhappy isle,
 And sing the gay old times,
 Old times ! old times !

And sure the land is nothing changed,
 The birds are singing still,
 The flowers are springing where we ranged,
 There's sunshine on the hill ;
 The sally, waving o'er my head,
 Still sweetly shades my frame ;
 But, ah, those happy days are fled,
 And I am not the same.

Old times ! old times !

Oh, come again, ye merry times,
 Sweet, sunny, fresh and calm,
 And let me hear those Easter chimes,
 And wear my Sunday palm.
 If I could cry away mine eyes,
 My tears would flow in vain ;
 If I could waste my heart in sighs
 They 'll never come again.

A personal feeling probably dictates the following fine stanzas ; one of Gerald Griffin's sisters having joined the Sisters of Charity in Dublin :—

She once was a lady of honour and wealth,
 Bright glowed on her features the roses of health,
 Her vesture was blended of silk and of gold,
 And her motion shook perfume from every fold ;
 Joy revelled around her, love shone at her side,
 And gay was her smile as the glance of a bride,
 And light was her step in the mirth-sounding hall
 When she heard of the daughters of Vincent de Paul.

She felt in her spirit the summons of grace
 That called her to live for the suffering race,
 And heedless of pleasure, of comfort, of home,
 Rose quickly, like Mary, and answered "I come !"
 She put from her person the trappings of pride,
 And passed from her home with the joy of a bride,
 Nor wept at the threshold as onward she moved,
 For her heart was on fire in the cause that she loved.

Lost ever to fashion, to vanity lost,
 That beauty that once was the song and the toast ;
 No more in the ball-room that figure we meet,
 But gliding at dusk to the wretch's retreat.

Forgot in the halls is that high-sounding name,
For the Sister of Charity blushes at fame ;
Forgot are the claims of her riches and birth,
For she barters for Heaven the glory of earth.

Those feet, that to music could gracefully move,
Now bear her alone on the mission of love ;
Those hands, that once dangled the perfume or gem,
Are tending the helpless or lifted for them ;
That voice, that once echoed the song of the vain,
Now whispers relief to the bosom of pain ;
And the hair that was shining with diamond and pearl,
Is wet with the tears of the penitent girl.

Her down-bed a pallet, her trinkets a bead,
Her lustre one taper that serves her to read,
Her sculpture the crucifix nailed by her bed,
Her paintings one print of the thorn-crowned head,
Her cushion the pavement that wearies her knees,
Her music the psalm or the sigh of disease,
The delicate lady lives mortified there,
And the feast is forsaken for fasting and prayer.

Yet not to the service of heart and of mind
Are the cares of that heaven-minded virgin confined,
Like Him whom she loves, to the mansion of grief
She hastens with the tidings of joy and relief ;
She strengthens the weary, she comforts the weak,
And soft is her voice in the ear of the sick ;
Where want and affliction on mortals attend,
The Sister of Charity *there* is a friend.

Unshrinking where Pestilence scatters his breath
Like an angel she moves mid the vapour of death ;
Where rings the loud musket and flashes the sword,
Unfearing she walks, for she follows the Lord.
How sweetly she bends o'er each plague-tainted face
With looks that are lighted with holiest grace !
How kindly she dresses each suffering limb,
For she sees in the wounded the image of Him !

Behold her, ye worldly ! behold her, ye vain !
Who shrink from the pathway of virtue and pain,
Who yield up to pleasure your nights and your days—
Forgetful of service, forgetful of praise !
Ye lazy philosophers, self-seeking men,
Ye fireside philanthropists, great at the pen,
How stands in the balance your eloquence weighed
With the life and the deeds of that delicate maid ?

I add another charming bridal song, the vein in which he excelled, and which he loved so well, omitting only an Irish refrain—that pedantry of patriotism which disfigures so many of these lovely lyrics :—

My Mary of the curling hair,
 The laughing teeth and bashful air,
 Our bridal morn is dawning fair
 With blushes in the skies.

My love ! my pearl !
 My own dear girl !
 My mountain maid, arise !

Wake, linnet of the osier grove !
 Wake, trembling, stainless virgin dove !
 Wake, nestling of a parent's love !
 Let Moran see thine eyes.

I am no stranger, proud and gay,
 To win thee from thy home away,
 And find thee for a distant day,
 A theme for wasting sighs.

But we were known from infancy.
 Thy father's hearth was home to me,
 No selfish love was mine for thee,
 Unholy and unwise.

And yet (to see what love can do),
 Though calm my hope has burned and true,
 My cheek is pale and worn for you,
 And sunken are mine eyes !

But soon my love shall be my bride ;
 And happy by our own fireside,
 My veins shall feel the rosy tide
 That lingering hope denies.

My Mary of the curling hair,
 The laughing teeth and bashful air,
 Our bridal morn is dawning fair,
 With blushes in the skies.
 My love ! my pearl !
 My own dear girl !
 My mountain maid, arise !

As a novelist, I cannot resist the temptation of pointing out a chapter in one of Gerald Griffin's less-known tales which has always seemed to me remarkable for character, for spirit, and for critical and verbal felicity of the highest order.

"The Collegians," partly from the striking interest of the story, partly from a certain careless grace and freshness of narration, won immediate popularity. "The Rivals," equally true to individual nature, and superior in constructive skill, was comparatively unsuccessful.

Perhaps the reason of this failure may be found in the principal incident, resembling in its main points that of Mr. Leigh Hunt's "Legend of Florence." The heroine, like

Ginevra, is buried while in a trance, and recovered, not like the Italian wife, from the effect of natural causes, but by the half-crazy efforts of her lover, who violates the sanctity of the tomb that he may gaze once again in death upon the form he so loved while living. Now this catastrophe, although it may have occurred, and there is reason to believe has occurred in more instances than one, is yet, even in the Italian version, so improbable and so horrible, so utterly repugnant to human sympathy as to be, in spite of Mr. Hunt's success, of exceedingly dangerous and questionable use whether in play or in story. Shakespeare, who always foresaw, as by instinct, the objections of his audience, seems to have composed Juliet's famous speech before taking the sleeping draught, by way of forestalling their distaste to the possible consequences of the act ; and this horror is so much aggravated in the Irish tale, by the circumstance of the closed coffin, that no power of conception or skill in execution could ensure an extensive or a durable popularity to a work founded on such a basis. Therefore, and as I think for that reason only, "The Rivals" will never command the same full applause as "The Collegians," which, however little talked of at this moment, is sure to retain a permanent station in Irish literature ; and the chapter which I am about to quote, from "The Second Series of Tales of the Munster Festivals," will probably be new even to the admirers of the first.

This chapter is, strictly speaking, an episode ; a scene in a village school, whose principal actors, the ragged Irish pupil who construes Virgil word for word, and the almost equally ragged usher who corrects his blunders and encourages his successes, never reappear, so far as I can remember, in the whole course of the story. The enthusiasm of the poor County Wicklow Professor lighting up as he expounds even to an audience of tattered and ignorant boys the beauties of his favourite bard, the manner in which his own English, so singularly degraded and provincial in his ordinary talk, becomes elevated and poetical by contact with the great Mantuan, is one of the finest and most pathetic instances of the consolations of scholarship, of the triumph of the intellect over the situation, that I have anywhere met. It would be noted as one of his happiest touches if we found it in Scott.

I have only to beg pardon for any misprints that may be

found in my Latin ; of which, in the regular grammatical Etonian sense, I, an unlearned woman, know absolutely nothing :—referring myself wholly to the care and kindness of Mr. Bentley's excellent body of compositors and readers, who, in this, as in many other matters, are far more accomplished and scholarly persons than I can pretend to be. Now for Gerald Griffin.

“ The school-house at Glendalough was situated near the romantic river which flows between the wild scenery of Drumgoff and the Seven Churches. It was a low stone building, indifferently thatched ; the whole interior consisting of one oblong room, floored with clay, and lighted by two or three windows, the panes of which were patched with old copy-books, or altogether supplanted by school slates. The walls had once been plastered and whitewashed, but now partook of that appearance of dilapidation which characterised the whole building. In many places which yet remained uninjured, the malign spirit of satire (a demon for whom the court is not too high nor the cottage too humble), had developed itself in sundry amusing and ingenious devices. Here, with the end of a burnt stick, was traced the hideous outline of a human profile, professing to be a likeness of ‘Tom Guerin,’ and here might be seen the ‘woeful lamentation and dying declaration of Neddy Mulcahy,’ while that worthy dangled in effigy from a gallows overhead. In some instances, indeed, the village Hogarth with peculiar hardihood seemed to have sketched in a slight hit at ‘the Masther,’ the formidable Mr. Lenigan himself. Along each wall were placed a row of large stones, the one intended to furnish seats for the boys, the other for the girls ; the decorum of Mr. Lenigan’s establishment requiring that they should be kept apart on ordinary occasions, for Mr. Lenigan, it should be understood, had not been furnished with any Pestalozzian light. The only chair in the whole establishment was that which was usually occupied by Mr. Lenigan himself, and a table appeared to be a luxury of which they were either ignorant or wholly regardless.

“ A traveller in Ireland who is acquainted with the ancient chronicles of the country, must be struck by the resemblance between the ancient and modern Irish in their mode of education. In that translation of Stanihurst which Holinshed

admits into his collection we find the following passage:—‘In their schools they grovel upon couches of straw, their books at their noses, themselves lie flat prostrate, and so they shout out with a loud voice their lessons by piecemeal, repeating two or three words thirty or forty times together.’ The system of mnemonics described in the last sentence is still in vigorous use.

“On the morning after the conversation described in the last chapter, Mr. Lenigan was rather later than his usual hour in taking possession of the chair above alluded to. The sun was mounting swiftly up the heavens. The rows of stones before described were already occupied, and the babble of a hundred voices like the sound of a beehive filled the house. Now and then a school-boy in frieze coat and corduroy trousers with an ink-bottle dangling at his breast, copy-book, slate, Voster, and ‘reading-book’ under one arm, and a sod of turf under the other, dropped in and took his place upon the next unoccupied stone. A great boy with a huge slate in his arms stood in the centre of the apartment, making a list of all those who were guilty of any indecorum in the absence of the ‘Masther.’ Near the door was a blazing turf fire, which the sharp autumnal winds already rendered agreeable. In a corner behind the door lay a heap of fuel formed by the contributions of all the scholars, each being obliged to bring one sod of turf every day, and each having the privilege of sitting by the fire while his own sod was burning. Those who failed to pay their tribute of fuel, sat cold and shivering the whole day long at the farther end of the room, huddling together their bare and frost-bitten toes, and casting a longing, envious eye towards the peristyle of well-marbled shins that surrounded the fire.

“Full in the influence of the cherishing flame was placed the hay-bottomed chair that supported the person of Mr. Henry Lenigan, when that great man presided in person in his rural academy. On his right lay a close bush of hazel of astounding size, the emblem of his authority, and the implement of castigation. Near this was a wooden sthroker, that is to say, a large rule of smooth and polished deal, used for sthroking lines in the copy-book, and also for sthroking the palms of refractory pupils. On the other side lay a lofty heap of copy-books, which were left there by the boys and

girls for the purpose of having their copies 'sot' by the 'Masther!'

"About noon a sudden hush was produced by the appearance at the open door of a young man, dressed in rusty black, and with something clerical in his costume and demeanour. This was Mr. Lenigan's classical assistant; for to himself the volumes of ancient literature were a fountain sealed. Five or six stout young men, all of whom were intended for learned professions, were the only portion of Mr. Lenigan's scholars that aspired to those lofty sources of information. At the sound of the word 'Virgil!' from the lips of the assistant, the whole class started from their seats, and crowded round him, each brandishing a smoky volume of the great Augustan poet, who, could he have looked into this Irish academy, from that part of the infernal regions in which he had been placed by his pupil Dante; might have been tempted to exclaim in the pathetic words of his own hero:—

"—Sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi,
Sunt lachryma rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt."

"'Who's head?' was the first question proposed by the assistant, after he had thrown open the volume at that part marked as the day's lesson.

"'Jim Naughtin, Sir.'

"'Well, Naughtin, begin. Conster,* conster now, an' be quick.'

"'At puer Ascanius mediis in vallibus acri
Gaudet equo; jamque hos cursu, jam præterit illos:
Spumantemque dari—'

"'Go on, Sir. Why don't you conster?'

"'At puer Ascanius,' the person so addressed began, 'but the boy Ascanius; *mediis in vallibus*, in the middle of the valley; *gaudet*, rejoices.'

"'Exults, ara gal, exults is a betther word.'

"'Gaudet, exults; *acri equo*, upon his bitther horse.'

"'Oh, murther alive; his bitther horse, inagh? Erra, what would make a horse be bitther, Jim? Sure 'tis not of sour beer he's talking! Rejoicin' upon a bitther horse! Dear knows what a show he was! what raison he had for

* Construe—translate.

it. *Acri equo*, upon his mettlesome steed ; that's the con-
sthruction.'

" Jim proceeded :—

" " *Acri equo*, upon his mettlesome steed ; *jamque*, and now ;
præterit, he goes beyond—'

" " *Outsthriips, achree !*'

" " *Præterit*, he outsthriips ; *hos*, these ; *jamque illos*, and now
those ; *cursu*, in his course ; *que*, and ; *optat*, he longs—'

" " Very good, Jim ; *longs* is a very good word there ; I
thought you were going to say *wishes*. Did anybody tell
you that ?'

" " Dickens a one, Sir !'

" " That's a good boy. Well ?'

" " *Optat*, he longs ; *spumantum aprum*, that a foaming boar ;
dari, shall be given ; *votis*, to his desires ; *aut fulvum leonum*,
or that a tawny lion—'

" " That's a good word again. *Tawny* is a good word ;
betther than *yellow*.'

" " *Decendere*, shall descend ; *monte*, from the mountain.'

" " Now, boys, observe the beauty of the poet. There's
great nature in the picture of the boy Ascanius. Just the
same way as we see young Misther Keiley, of the Grove, at
the fox-chase the other day, leadin' the whole of 'em right
and left, *jamque hos, jamque illos*, an' now Misther Cleary, an
now Captain Davis, he outsthripped in his course. A beau-
tiful picture, boys, there is in them four lines, of a fine high-
blooded youth. Yes, people are always the same ; times an
manners change, but the heart o' man is the same now as it
was in the day of Augustus. But consther your task, Jim,
an' then I give you an' the boys a little commentary upon its
beauties.'

" The boy obeyed, and read as far as *prætextit nomine culpam*,
after which the assistant proceeded to pronounce his little
commentary. Unwilling to deprive the literary world of any
advantage which the mighty monarch of the Roman epopee
may derive from his analysis, we subjoin the speech without
any abridgment.

" " Now, boys, for what I told ye. Them seventeen lines
that Jim Naughtin consthered this minute contains as much
as fifty in a modhern book. I pointed out to ye before the

picture of Ascanius, an' I'll back it again the world for nature. Then there's the incipient storm :—

“ ‘ Interea magno misceri murmure cœlum
Incipit.’

Erra ! don't be talkin', but listen to that ! There's a rumbling in the language like the sound of coming thundher—

“ ‘ —insequitur commistâ grandine nimbus.’

D'ye hear the change ? D'ye hear all the s's ? D'ye hear 'em whistlin' ? D'ye hear the black squall comin' up the hill-side, brushin' up the dust and dhry leaves off the road, and hissin' through the threes and bushes ? An' d'ye hear the hail dhriven afther, and spattherin' the laves, and whitenin' the face o' the countrry ? *Commistâ grandine nimbus* ! That I mightn't sin, but when I read them words, I gather my head down between my shouldhers, as if it was hailin' a top o' me. An' then the eighth of all the huntin' party ! Dido, an' the Throjans, an' all the great court ladies and the Tyrian companions scattered like cracked people about the place, lookin' for shelther, and peltin' about right and left, hether and thether in all directions for the bare life, an' the floods swellin' an' comin', an' thundherin' down in rivers from the mountains, an' all in three lines :—

“ ‘ Et Tyrii comites passim, et Trojana juventus
Dardaniusque nepos Veneris, diversa per agros
Tecta metu petiere : ruunt de montibus annes.’

An' see the beauty of the poet, followin' up the character of Ascanius ; he makes him the last to quit the field. First the Tyrian comrades, an effeminate race, that ran at the eighth of a shower, as if they were made o' salt that they'd melt under it ; an' then the Throjan youth, lads that were used to it in the first book ; an' last of all the spirited boy Ascanius himself. (Silence near the doore !)

“ ‘ Speluncam Dido, dux et Trojanus eandem,
Deveniunt.’

Observe, boys, he no longer calls him as of old, the *pius Æneas*, only *Dux Trojanus* the Throjan laidher, an' 'tis he that was the laidher and the lad ; see the taste of the poet not to call him the *pius Æneas* now, nor even mention his name, as if he were half ashamed of him, knowin' well what a lad he had to

dale with. There's where Virgil took the crust out o' Homer's mouth in the nateness of his language, that you'd gather a part o' the feelin' from the very shape o' the line an' turn o' the prosody. As formerly, when Dido was askin' Æneas concernin' where he come from, an' where he was born? He makes answer:—

“*Est locus Hesperiam Graii cognomine dicunt:
Terra antiqua, potens armis atque ubere glebæ,
Huc cursus fuit.*”

An' there the line stops short, as much as to say, just as I cut this line short in spakin' to you, just so our coorse was cut, in going to Italy. The same way, when Juno is vexed in talkin' o' the Throjans, he makes her spake bad Latin to show how mad she is: (Silence !)

“*—Mene incepto desistere victimam
Nec posse Italia Teucrorum avertere regem!
Quippe vtor fatis! Pallasne exurere classem
Argivum, atque ipsos potuit submergere ponto.*”

So he laves you to guess what a passion she is in, when he makes her lave an infinitive mood without anything to govern it. You can't attribute it to ignorance, for it would be a dhroll thing in airnest, if Juno, the queen of all the gods, didn't know a common rule in syntax, so that you have nothing for it but to say that she must be the very moral of a jury. Such, boys, is the art o' poets, an' the janius o' languages.

“ But I kept ye long enough. Go along to ye'r Greek now, as fast as ye can, an' reharse. An' as for ye,’ continued the learned commentator, turning to the mass of English scholars, ‘ I see one comin’ over the river that’ll taich ye how to behave yerselves, as it’s a thing ye won’t do for me. Put up yer Virgils now, boys, an’ out with the Greek, an’ remember the beauties I pointed out to ye, for they’re things that few can explain to ye, if ye havn’t the luck to think of ‘em yerselves.’

“ The class separated, and a hundred anxious eyes were directed towards the open door. It afforded a glimpse of a sunny green, and a babbling river, over which Mr. Lenigan, followed by his brother David, was now observed in the act of picking his cautious way. At this apparition a sudden change took place in the condition of the entire school.

Stragglers flew to their places ; the impatient burst of laughter was cut short ; the growing fit of rage was quelled ; the uplifted hand dropped harmless by the side of its owner ; merry faces grew serious, and angry ones peaceable ; the eyes of all seemed poring on their books ; and the extravagant uproar of the last half hour was hushed on a sudden into a diligent murmur. Those who were most proficient in the study of ‘the Masther’s’ physiognomy detected in the expression of his eyes, as he entered and greeted his assistant, something of a troubled and uneasy character. He took the list with a severe countenance, from the hands of the boy above mentioned, sent all those whose names he found upon the fatal record to kneel down in a corner, until he should find leisure to ‘hoise’ them, and then prepared to enter upon his daily functions.”

For the present, however, the delinquents are saved by the entrance of a fresh character upon the scene.

“ The new-comer was a handsome young woman, who carried a pet child in her arms, and held another by the hand. The sensation of pleasure which ran among the young culprits at her appearance showed her to be their ‘great Captain’s Captain,’ the beloved and loving helpmate of Mr. Lenigan. Casting, unperceived by her lord, an encouraging smile towards the kneeling culprits, she took an opportunity, while engaged in a wheedling conversation with her husband, to purloin his deal rule, and to blot out the list of the proscribed from the slate, after which she stole out calling David to dig the potatoes for dinner.”

And so, we too will leave the school.

XXXVI.

MOCK-HEROIC POETRY.

JOHN HOOKHAM FRERE.

LONG before “Beppo” the experiment of imitating the well-known Italian school, which unites so strangely the wildest romance of chivalry with pungent satire and good-humoured pleasantry, had been successfully tried by John Hookham Frere, one of Mr. Canning’s most brilliant co-

adjutors in the poetry of the "Anti-Jacobin." The mock-heroic in question bore the curious title of "Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work by William and Robert Whistlecroft, of Stowmarket, in Suffolk, Harness and Collar Makers. Intended to comprise the most interesting Particulars relating to King Arthur and his round table." Two cantos were published by Mr. Murray in 1817; and a third and fourth rapidly followed. The success was decided; but the poem has been long out of print, and is now amongst the rarest books in modern literature.

To attempt to tell the story of a poem which travels backward and forward from knights to giants and from giants to monks, no sooner interesting you in one set of personages than he casts them off to fly to other scenes and other actors, would be a fruitless task. Who would venture to trace the adventures of the *Orlando Furioso*? and Mr. Frere, in imitating the "Morgante Maggiore," and other parodies of the great poet of romance, has won for himself the privilege of wandering at pleasure over the whole realm of chivalrous fable, and makes the best use of that privilege by being often picturesque, often amusing, and never wearisome.

The poem opens with a feast given by King Arthur at Carlisle to his knights, who are thus described:—

They looked a manly generous generation,
Beards, shoulders, eye-brows, broad and square and thick;
Their accents firm and loud in conversation,
Their eyes and gestures eager, sharp and quick,
Showed them prepared on proper provocation
To give the lie, pull noses, stab and kick;
And for that very reason it is said
They were so very courteous and well-bred.

Then come the giants, living in a valley near Carlisle. The description of this place affords an excellent opportunity for displaying Mr. Frere's command over a higher order of poetry.

Huge mountains of immeasurable height
Encompassed all the level valley round
With mighty slabs of rocks, that stood upright,
An insurmountable and enormous mound.
The very river vanished out of sight,
Absorbed in secret channels underground;
That vale was so sequestered and secluded
All search for ages past it had eluded.

A rock was in the centre, like a cone
 Abruptly rising from a miry pool,
 Where they beheld a hill of massy stone,
 Whic'l masons of the rude primæval school
 Had reared by help of giant hands alone,
 With rocky fragments unreduced by rule ;
 Irregular like nature more than art,
 Huge, rugged, and compact in every part.

A wild tumultuous torrent raged around
 Of fragments tumbling from the mountain's height ;
 The whistling clouds of dust, the deafening sound,
 The hurried motion that amazed the sight,
 The constant quaking of the solid ground,
 Environed them with phantoms of affright ;
 Yet with heroic hearts they held right on
 Till the last point of their ascent was won.

The giants who dwelt in this romantic spot had captured some ladies, whom the knights thought it their duty to deliver. They overcame the grisly warriors as a matter of course ; and the state in which they find the fair prisoners is related in a stanza of which the concluding couplet bears some resemblance to a well-known transition in "Don Juan :"

The ladies ! They were tolerably well,
 At least as well as could be well expected :
 Many details I must forbear to tell,
 Their toilet had been very much neglected ;
 But by supreme good luck it so befel
 That, when the castle's capture was effected,
 When those vile cannibals were overpowered
 Only two fat duennas were devoured.

In the third book, according to the universal practice of the Italian poets, the story takes a backward leap, and recounts a previous feud between the giants and the inhabitants of a neighbouring monastery. A certain monk, Brother John by name, who had gone out alone to fish in a stream near the Abbey, is luckily enabled to give notice to the brethren of the approach of their enemies. The scene of his sport is finely described :—

A mighty current unconfined and free,
 Ran wheedling round beneath the mountain's shade,
 Battering its wave-worn base ; but you might see
 On the near margin many a watery glade,
 Be calmed beneath some little island's lee,
 All tranquil and transparent, close embayed ;
 Reflecting in the deep serene and even
 Each flower and herb, and every cloud of heaven.

The painted king-fisher, the branch above her
 Hard in the steadfast mirror fixed and true;
 Anon the fitful breezes brood and hover,
 Freshening the surface with a rougher hue;
 Spreading, withdrawing, pausing, passing over,
 Again returning to retire anew:
 So rest and motion in a narrow range
 Feasted the sight with joyous interchange.

A stout resistance is made by the monks, and the giants at length withdraw from the scene of action:—

And now the gates are open, and the throng
 Forth issuing the deserted camp survey:
 "Here Murdomack and Mangonel the strong
 And Gorbuduc were lodged, and here," they say,
 "This pigsty to Poldavy did belong;
 Here Bundleback and here Phigander lay."
 They view the deep indentures, broad and round,
 Which mark their postures squatting on the ground.

Then to the traces of gigantic feet,
 Huge, wide apart, with half a dozen toes;
 They track them on till they converge and meet
 (An earnest and assurance of repose)
 Close at the ford. The cause of this retreat
 They all conjecture, but no creature knows;
 It was ascribed to causes multifarious,
 To saints, to Jerome, George, and Januarius,

To their own pious founder's intercession,
 To Ave-Marias and our Lady's Psalter;
 To news that Friar John was in possession,
 To new wax-candles placed upon the altar,
 To their own prudence, valour and discretion:
 To reliques, rosaries, and holy water;
 To beads and psalms, and feats of arms;—in short
 There was no end of their accounting for't.

In the last volume of Mr. Lockhart's "Life of Sir Walter Scott," is a very interesting account of the delight which the great minstrel took to the last in Mr. Frere's spirited versions of the old Spanish ballads. "In speaking of Mr. Frere's translations, he repeated a pretty long passage from his version of one of the romances of the Cid (published in the Appendix to Southey's Quarto), and seemed to enjoy a spirited charge of the knights therein described, as much as he could have done in his best days; placing his walking-stick in rest like a lance, to suit the action to the word."—*Extract from Mrs. John Dary's Journal of Sir Walter Scott's Residence in Malta.*

The following is the passage referred to :—

The gates were then thrown open, and forth at once they rushed.
 The outposts of the Moorish hosts back to the camp were pushed ;
 The camp was all in tumult, and there was such a thunder
 Of cymbals and of drums, as if earth would cleave in sunder.
 There you might see the Moors arming themselves in haste,
 And the two main battles how they were forming fast,
 Horsemen and footmen mixed, a countless troop and vast...
 The Moors are moving forward, the battle soon must join :
 " My men, stand here in order, ranged upon a line !
 Let not a man move from his rank before I give the sign."
 Pero Bermuez heard the word, but he could not refrain,
 He held the banner in his hand, he gave the horse the rein.
 " You see yon foremost squadron there, the thickest of the foes,
 Noble Cid, God be your aid, for there your banner goes !
 Let him who serves and honours it show the duty that he owes."
 Earnestly the Cid called out : " For Heaven's sake be still !"
 Bermuez cried, " I cannot hold ! " so eager was his will.
 He spurred his horse and drove him on amid the Moorish rout ;
 They strove to win the banner, and compassed him about.
 Had not his armour been so true, he had lost either life or limb ;
 The Cid called out again : " For Heaven's sake succour him ! "
 Their shields before their breasts forth at once they go,
 Their lances in the rest levelled fair and low,
 Their heads all stooping down towards the saddle-bow.
 The Cid was in the midst, his shout was heard afar,
 " I am Ruy Diaz, the champion of Bivar !
 Strike among them, gentlemen, for sweet Mercy's sake ! "
 Then where Bermuez fought amidst the foe they brake ;
 Three hundred bannered knights, it was a gallant show,
 Three hundred Moors they killed, a man at every blow !
 When they wheeled and turned, as many more lay slain,
 You might see them raise their lances, and level them again,
 There you might see the breast-plates, how they were cleft in twain,
 And many a Moorish shield lie scattered on the plain,
 The pennons that were white marked with a crimson stain,
 The horses running wild whose riders had been slain.

Mr. Frere's familiarity with Spanish literature probably took its rise from his employment in various diplomatic missions during the Peninsular war ; but his great achievement as a translator is of a far higher and more difficult order. The following specimen of his version of "The Frogs" of Aristophanes will show how completely he has contrived to naturalise the wit and humour of the old Athenian dramatist. The passage about "full and equal franchise" might pass for a translation from half a dozen modern languages at the present hour :—

RANKE.

Chorus.

Muse attend our solemn summons,
 And survey the assembled Commons,
 Congregated as they sit,
 An enormous mass of wit,
 —Full of genius taste and fire,
 Jealous pride and critic ire—
 Cleophon among the rest
 (Like the swallow from her nest
 A familiar foreign bird)
 Chatters loud and will be heard,
 (With the accent and the grace
 Which he brought with him from Thrace)
 But we fear the tuneful strain
 Must be turned to grief and pain;
 He must sing a dirge perforce
 When his trial takes its course;
 We shall hear him moan and wail
 Like the plaintive nightingale.

It behoves the sacred Chorus and of right to them belongs,
 To suggest sagacious councils in their verses and their songs.
 In performance of our office we suggest with all humility
 A proposal for removing groundless fears and disability;

* * * * *

Better would it be, believe us, casting off revenge and pride,
 To receive as friends and kinsmen all that combat on our side
 Into full and equal franchise: on the other hand we fear
 If your hearts are filled with fancies, proud, captious and severe,
 While the shock of instant danger threatens shipwreck to the State,
 Such resolves will be lamented and repented of too late.

If the Muse foresees at all
 What in future will befall
 Dirty Cleigenes the small—
 He the scoundrel at the bath—
 Will not long escape from scath,
 But must perish by and by,
 With his potash and his lye,
 And his soap and scouring ball,
 And his washes, one or all;
 Therefore he can never cease
 To declaim against a peace.

These two portraits of Cleophon and Cleigenes are so graphic, that they might serve H. B. as models for a caricature. What follows introduces the celebrated contest for supremacy between *Æschylus* and *Euripides*. The scene is laid in the Infernal Regions:—

Enter XANTHIAS and AEACUS.

AEACUS.

By Jupiter ! but he 's a gentleman
That master of yours.

XANTHIAS.

A gentleman ! to be sure he is ;
Why he does nothing else but wench and drink.

AEACUS.

His never striking you when you took his name,—
Outfacing him and contradicting him !

XANTHIAS.

It might have been worse for him if he had.

AEACUS.

Well, that 's well spoken, like a true-bred slave.
It 's just the sort of language I delight in.

XANTHIAS.

You love excuses ?

AEACUS.

Yes, but I prefer
Cursing my master quietly in private.

XANTHIAS.

Mischief you 're fond of ?

AEACUS.

Very fond indeed.

XANTHIAS.

What think ye of muttering as you leave the room
After a beating ?

AEACUS.

Why that 's pleasant too.

XANTHIAS.

By Jove it is ! But listening at the door
To hear their secrets ?

AEACUS.

Oh ! there 's nothing like it !

XANTHIAS.

And then the reporting them in the neighbourhood.

AEACUS.

That 's beyond everything, that 's quite ecstatic.

XANTHIAS.

Well, give me your hand, and there, take mine,—and buss me,
And there again—and tell me, for Jupiter's sake,—
For he 's the patron of our kicks and beatings—
What 's all that noise and bustle and abuse
Within there ?

ÆACUS.

Æschylus and Euripides only.

XANTHIAS.

Ha!

ÆACUS.

Why, there's a custom we have established
 In favour of professors of the arts.
 When any one, the first man in his line
 Comes down amongst us here, he stands entitled
 To privilege and precedence, with a seat
 At Pluto's royal board.

XANTHIAS.

I understand you.

ÆACUS.

So he maintains it, till there comes a better
 Of the same sort, and then resigns it up.

XANTHIAS.

But why should Æschylus be disturbed at this?

ÆACUS.

He held the seat for Tragedy, as being master
 In that profession.

XANTHIAS.

Well, and who's there now?

ÆACUS.

He kept it till Euripides appeared;
 But he collected audiences about him,
 And flourished and exhibited and harangued
 Before the thieves and housebreakers, and rogues
 Cutpurses, cheats and vagabonds and villains,
 That make the mass of population here;
 And they—being quite transported and delighted
 With all his subtleties, and niceties,
 Equivocations, quibbles and so forth,
 Evasions and objections and replies,—
 In short—they raised an uproar, and declared him
 Archpoet, by a general acclamation.
 And he with this grew proud and confident,
 And laid a claim to the seat where Æschylus sate.

XANTHIAS.

And did not he get pelted for his pains?

ÆACUS.

Why, no.—The mob called out, and it was carried
 To have a public trial of skill between them.

XANTHIAS.

You mean the mob of scoundrels that you mentioned.

ÆACUS.

Scoundrels, indeed! Ay, scoundrels without number.

XANTHIAS.

But *Æschylus* must have had good friends and hearty.

ÆACUS.

Yes; but good men are scarce, both here and elsewhere.

XANTHIAS.

Well, what has *Pluto* settled to have done?

ÆACUS.

To have a trial and examination
In public.

XANTHIAS.

But how comes it, *Sophocles*?

Why does not he put in his claim amongst them?

ÆACUS.

No, no, not he!—the moment he came down here
 He went up and saluted *Æschylus*,
 And kissed his cheek and took his hand quite kindly;
 And *Æschylus* edged a little from his chair
 To give him room; so now the story goes
 (At least I had it from Cleidemides),
 He means to attend there as a stander-by,
 Professing to take up the conqueror.
 If *Æschylus* gets the better,—well and good,
 He gives up his pretensions;—but if not
 He'll stand a trial, he says, against *Euripides*.

It is impossible for any translator to give a more perfect rendering of comedy. The facility, the flow, the living, breathing, chattering impudence of the two slaves, is inimitably lively and true. It may be doubted if Sheridan knew much about Aristophanes, but following the same great model, Nature, he has produced a companion scene to this dialogue in the opening of “*The Rivals*.” The compliment to *Sophocles* and *Æschylus* is very graceful. Bacchus, the appointed judge, now enters, accompanied by the rival bards, and the contest begins:—

Chorus.

Here beside you, here are we
 Eager all to hear and see
 This abstruse and curious battle,
 Of profound and learned prattle,
 —But as it appears to me,
 Thus the course of it will be;
 That the junior and appellant
 Will advance as the assailant,
 Aiming shrewd satyric darts
 At his rival's noble parts,

And, with sallies sharp and keen,
Try to wound him in the spleen ;
While the veteran rends and raises
Rifted rough uprooted phrases.
Wields them like a threshing-staff,
And dispels the dust and chaff.

BACCHUS.

Come now begin and speak away ; but first I give you warning
That all your language and discourse must be genteel and clever,
Without abusive similes, or common vulgar joking.

EURIPIDES.

At the first outset I forbear to state my own pretensions ;
Hereafter I shall mention them when his have been refuted ;
And after I have proved and shown how he abused and cheated
The rustic audience that he found, which Phrynicus has bequeathed
He planted first upon the stage a figure veiled and muffled, [him.
An Achilles or a Niobe that never showed their faces,
But kept a tragic attitude without a word to utter.

BACCHUS.

No more they did ; it's very true.—

EURIPIDES.

In the meanwhile the Chorus
Strung on ten strophes right an end, but they remained in silence.

BACCHUS.

I liked that silence well enough ; as well perhaps or better
Than those new talking characters.

EURIPIDES.

That's from your want of judgment,
Believe me.

BACCHUS.

Why perhaps it is :—but what was his intention ?

EURIPIDES.

Why mere conceit and insolence—to keep the people waiting
Till Niobe should deign to speak, to drive his drama forward.

BACCHUS.

O what a rascal ! Now I see the tricks he used to play me.

[*To Aeschylus, who is showing signs of indignation by various contortions.*]

—What makes you writhe and wince about ?

EURIPIDES.

Because he feels my censures :
Then having dragged and drawled along half way to the conclusion,
He foisted in a dozen words of noisy boisterous accent,
With "nodding plumes and shaggy brows," mere bugbears of the
That no man ever heard before. [language,

AESCHYLUS.

Alas ! alas !

BACCHUS [*To Aeschylus*].

Have done there !

EURIPIDES.

His words were never clear or plain.

BACCHUS [*To Aeschylus*].

Don't grind your teeth so strangely.

EURIPIDES.

But Bulwarks and Scamanders, and Hippogriffs, and Gorgons,
"Embost on brazen bucklers" and grim remorseless phrases
Which nobody could understand.

BACCHUS.

Well, I confess for my part,

I used to keep awake at night, conjecturing and guessing
To think what kind of foreign bird he meant by griffin-horses.

ÆSCHYLUS.

A figure on the heads of ships ; you goose, you must have seen them.

BACCHUS.

I took it for Philoxenus, for my part, from the likeness.

EURIPIDES.

So ! figures from the heads of ships are fit for tragic diction.

ÆSCHYLUS.

Well then, thou paltry wretch, explain—What were thy own devices ?

EURIPIDES.

Not stories about flying stags, like yours, and griffin-horses ;
Nor terms nor images derived from tapestry Persian hangings.
When I received the Muse from you, I found her puffed and
pampered.

With pompous sentences and terms, a cumbrous huge virago.
My first attention was applied to make her look genteelly,
And bring her to a moderate bulk by dint of lighter diet.
I fed her with plain household phrase and cool familiar salad,
With water-gruel episode, with sentimental jelly,
With moral mince-meat ; till at length I brought her within compass :
Cephisophon, who was my cook, contrived to make them relish
I kept my plots distinct and clear ; and to prevent confusion
My leading characters rehearsed their pedigrees for prologues.

ÆSCHYLUS.

'Twas well at least that you forbore to quote your own extraction.

(This is a most characteristic bit of Athenian malice,
Euripides was illegitimate.)

EURIPIDES.

From the first opening of the scene, all persons were in action :
The master spoke, the slave replied ;—the women, old and young
All had their equal share of talk. [ones,

ÆSCHYLUS.

Come then, stand forth and tell us
What forfeit less than death is due for such an innovation ?

EURIPIDES.

I did it upon principle, from democratic motives.

BACCHUS.

Take care, my friend ; upon that ground your footing is but ticklish.

EURIPIDES.

I taught these youths to speechify.

AESCHYLUS.

I say so too. Moreover

I say, that for the public good, you ought to have been hanged first.

EURIPIDES.

The rules and forms of rhetoric ; the laws of composition ;
To prate, to state, and in debate to meet a question fairly ;
At a dead lift to turn and shift ; to make a nice distinction.

AESCHYLUS.

I grant it all ; I make it all my ground of accusation.

EURIPIDES.

The whole in cases and concerns, occurring and recurring,
At every turn and every day, domestic and familiar ;
So that the audience, one and all, from personal experience,
Were competent to judge the piece and form a fair opinion
Whether my scenes and sentiments agreed with truth and nature.
I never took them by surprise, to storm their understandings
With Memnons and Tydides's and idle rattle-trappings
Of battle-steeds and clattering shields, to scare them from their senses.
But for a test (perhaps the best) our pupils and adherents
May be distinguished instantly by person and behaviour :
His are Phormisius the rough, Meganetes the gloomy,
Hobgoblin-headed, trumpet-mouthing, grim-visaged, ugly-bearded ;
But mine are Cleitophon the smooth, Theramenes the gentle.

BACCHUS.

Theramenes ! a clever hand, an universal genius ;
I never found him at a loss, in all the turns of party,
To change his watch-word at a word, or at a moment's warning.

EURIPIDES.

Thus it was that I began
With a nicer, neater plan ;
Teaching men to look about,
Both within doors and without ;
To direct their own affairs
And their house and household wares ;
Marking everything amiss—
“ Where is that ? and what is this ?
This is broken—That is gone ; ”—
‘T is the system and the tone.

BACCHUS.

Yes, by Jove ! and now we see
Citizens of each degree,

That the moment they come in
 Raise an uproar and a din,
 Rating all the servants round :
 " If it 's lost it must be found.
 Why was all the garlic wasted ?
 There that honey has been tasted ;
 And these olives pilfered here.
 Where 's the pot we bought last year ?
 What 's become of all the fish ?
 Which of you has broke the dish ? "
 Thus it is ; but heretofore
 They sat them down to doze and snore.

Nothing is more remarkable in this scene than the skill with which the poet has made Euripides, all along the chief object of his satire, expose his own faults in the very speeches in which he affects to magnify his merits. The translation is far above my praise, but as a woman privileged to avow her want of learning, it may be permitted to express the gratitude which the whole sex owes to the late illustrious scholar, who has enabled us to penetrate to the heart of one of the scholar's deepest mysteries, and to become acquainted with something more than the name of Aristophanes.

XXXVII.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

VISIT TO DONNINGTON—BATTLE OF NEWBURY.

LORD CLARENDON—GEOFFREY CHAUCER—JOHN HUGHES.

Of all places connected with the Great Civil War, none retains traces more evident and complete of its ravages than the beautiful district which a tolerable pedestrian may traverse in a morning walk, and which comprises the site of the two battles of Newbury, and the ruins of Donnington Castle, one of the most memorable sieges of the Parliamentary Army.

I went over that most interesting ground (not, however, on foot) on one of the most brilliant days of the last brilliant autumn, with the very companion for such an excursion : one who has shown in his " Boscobel " how well he can unite the most careful and accurate historical research with the rarer power which holds attention fixed upon the page ; and who,

possessing himself a fine old mansion at the foot of the Castle Hill, and having a good deal of the old cavalier feeling in his own character, takes an interest almost personal in the events and the places of the story.

The first of these engagements took place, according to Clarendon, on the 18th of September, 1643, and has been most minutely related by contemporary writers,—the noble historian of the Rebellion, Oldmixon, Heath, the anonymous author of “The Memoirs of Lord Essex,” and many others, varying as to certain points, according to their party predilections, but agreeing in the main. A very brief summary must answer my purpose.

Charles commanded the Royalists in person, whilst the Parliamentary forces were led by Essex,—the King's object being to intercept the enemy, and prevent his reaching London. The common, then and now called “The Wash,” was, together with the neighbouring lanes, the principal scene of the combat. The line of road has been in some measure altered, still sufficient indications remain to localise the several incidents of this hotly-contested field. Essex, assailed on his march from Hungerford by the fiery Rupert the evening before, encamped on the open common, “impatient,” as one of the Commonwealth narrators says, “of the sloth of darkness,” all the more so that the King is said to have sent the Earl a challenge to give battle the next day. On that day the great battle took place, when the valour of the raw and undisciplined trainbands, the citizen soldiers, so much despised by the cavaliers, withstood the chivalry of the royal army, and enabled the General, although hotly pursued for several miles, and furiously charged by Prince Rupert, who had three horses killed under him that day, to accomplish his object, and conduct his troops to London.

Essex, previous to his advance towards Reading, sent a “ticket” to Mr. Fulke, the minister of Enborne parish, commanding him to bury all the dead on either side; and three huge mounds still attest the compliance of the clergyman with an order worthy of a Christian soldier. His Majesty, hearing of the “pious wish” of the Lord-General, issued his warrant to the Mayor of Newbury for the recovery of the wounded. Rival historians differ as to the number of the killed. But it seems certain that the loss of the Parliament-

arians amounted to more than five hundred ; and that on the King's part not fewer than a thousand were wounded and slain. Amongst them fell many distinguished loyalists—above all, the young, the accomplished, the admirable Lord Falkland, he who, for talent and virtue, might be called the Hampden of his party, and who, like Hampden, left no equal behind.

The night before the battle he had slept at the house of Mr. Head, whom my companion (a man of ancient family and high connexions) was proud to claim among his ancestry ; and tradition says, that being convinced that an engagement the next day was inevitable, and being strongly impressed with the presentiment that it would prove fatal to himself, he determined, in order to be fully prepared for the event, to receive the sacrament. Accordingly very early on the morning of the battle it was administered to him by the clergyman of Newbury, and Mr. Head and the whole family, by Lord Falkland's particular wish, were present. It is also related that his corpse, a few hours afterwards, was brought slung on a horse, and deposited in the Town Hall, from whence it was subsequently removed for interment.

Such strong impressions of coming death were not uncommon in that age to men of imaginative temperament. But it is not improbable that Lord Falkland, in that hour of danger, remembered a prediction which had come across him strangely not many years before, and which is thus related :—

“ Whilst he was with the King at Oxford, his Majesty went one day to see the Library, where he was shown, among other books, a ‘ Virgil,’ nobly printed and exquisitely bound. The Lord Falkland, to divert the King, would have his Majesty make a trial of the *Sortes Virgilianæ*, an usual kind of divination in ages past, made by opening a ‘ Virgil.’ The King, opening the book, the passage which happened to come up was that part of Dido’s imprecation against *Aeneas*, *AEn.* IV. 615, &c., which is thus translated by Dryden :

“ ‘ Oppressed with numbers in the unequal field,
His men discouraged, and himself dispelled,
Let him for succour sue from place to place,
Torn from his subjects, and his son’s embrace.’

“ King Charles seeming concerned at this accident, the Lord Falkland, who observed it, would likewise try his own fortune

in the same manner, hoping that he might fall upon some passage that could have no relation to his case, and thereby divert the King's thoughts from any impression the other might make upon him ; but the place Lord Falkland stumbled upon was yet more suited to his destiny than the other had been to the King's, being the following expressions of Evander upon the untimely death of his son, Pallas, *Æn.* XI. 152 :

“ ‘ O Pallas ! thou hast failed thy plighted word !
To fight with caution, not to tempt the sword,
I warned thee, but in vain ; for well I knew
What perils youthful ardour would pursue ;
That boiling blood would carry thee too far,
Young as thou wert in dangers, raw to war.
O curst essay of arms ! disastrous doom !
Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come ! ’ ”

Charles was notoriously superstitious ; and we may well imagine, that besides the grief of losing the noble adherent, whose very presence conferred honour and dignity on his cause, a strong personal feeling must have pressed upon him as he recollects the double prophecy, one half of which had been so fatally fulfilled.

I could not choose a better specimen of Clarendon, that great master of historical portrait-painting, than his character of Lord Falkland. The writer who so immortalizes another, gains immortality himself :—

“ In this unhappy battle was slain the Lord Viscount Falkland, a person of such prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging a humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life, that if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single loss is, it must be most infamous and accursed to all posterity.

“ Before this parliament, his condition of life was so happy that it was hardly capable of improvement. Before he came to twenty years of age he was master of a noble fortune, which descended to him by the gift of a grandfather. His education for some years had been in Ireland, where his father was Lord-Deputy ; so that when he returned into England, to the possession of his fortune, he was unentangled with any acquaintance or friends, which usually grow up by the custom of conversation, and therefore was to make a pure election of

his company, which he chose by other rules than were prescribed to the young nobility of that time. And it cannot be denied, though he admitted some few to his friendship for the agreeableness of their manners and their undoubted affection to him, that his familiarity and friendship for the most part was with men of the most eminent and sublime parts, and of untouched reputation in point of integrity, and such men had a title to his bosom.

“ He was a great cherisher of wit, and fancy, and good parts in any man ; and if he found them clouded with poverty or want, a most liberal and bountiful patron towards them, even above his fortune ; of which in those administrations he was such a dispenser as if he had been trusted with it to such uses ; and if there had been the least of vice in his expense, he might have been thought too prodigal. He was constant and pertinacious in whatsoever he resolved to do, and not to be wearied by any pains that were necessary to that end ; and therefore having once resolved not to see London, which he loved above all other places, till he had perfectly learned the Greek tongue, he went to his own house in the country, and pursued it with that indefatigable industry, that it will not be believed in how short a time he was master of it, and had accurately read all the Greek historians.

“ In this time his house being within little more than ten miles of Oxford, he contracted familiarity and friendship with the most polite and accurate men of that University, who found such an immenseness of wit, and such a solidity of judgment in him, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination, such a vast knowledge, that he was not ignorant in anything, yet such an excessive humility as if he had known nothing, that they frequently resided and dwelt with him, as in a college, situated in a purer air ; so that his house was a University in a less volume, where they came not so much for repose as for study, and to examine and reform those grosser propositions, which laziness and consent made current in vulgar conversation.

* * * *

“ He was superior to all those passions and affections which attend vulgar minds, and was guilty of no other ambition than of knowledge and to be reputed a lover of all good men ; and that made him too much a contemner of those acts which

must be indulged in the transactions of human affairs. In the last short parliament he was a burgess in the House of Commons, * * * The great opinion he had of the uprightness and integrity of those persons who appeared most active, especially of Mr. Hampden, kept him longer from suspecting any design against the peace of the kingdom ; and though he differed from them commonly in conclusions, he believed long their purposes were honest. When he grew better informed what was law, and discerned in them a desire to control that law by a vote of one or both Houses, no man more opposed their attempts, or gave the adverse party more trouble by reason and argumentation ; insomuch as he was by degrees looked upon as an advocate for the Court ; to which he contributed so little that he declined more addresses and even those invitations which he was obliged almost by civility to entertain. And he was so jealous of the least imagination that he should incline to preferment, that he affected even a moroseness to the Court, and to the courtiers, and left nothing undone which might prevent and divert the King's or Queen's favour to him but the deserving it.

* * * * *

“ He had a courage of the most clear and keen temper, and so far from fear that he seemed not without some appetite of danger ; and therefore upon an occasion of action he always engaged his person in those troops which he thought by the forwardness of the commanders to be most like to be farthest engaged ; and in all such encounters he had about him an extraordinary cheerfulness, without at all affecting the execution that usually attended them ; in which he took no delight, but took pains to prevent it when it was not by resistance made necessary ; insomuch that at Edge-hill, when the enemy was routed, he was like to have incurred great peril, by interposing to save those who had thrown away their arms, and against whom it may be others were more fierce for their having thrown them away ; so that a man might think he came into the field chiefly out of curiosity to see the face of danger, and to prevent the shedding of blood. Yet in his natural inclination he acknowledged he was addicted to the profession of a soldier ; and shortly after he came to his fortune, before he was of age, he went into the Low Countries with a resolution of procuring command to give himself up to it ; from which

he was diverted by the complete inactivity of that summer ; so he returned again into England, and shortly after entered upon that vehement course of study we mentioned before, till the first alarm from the north ; then again he made ready for the field, and though he received some repulse in the command of a troop of horse of which he had a promise, he went a volunteer with the Earl of Essex.

“ From the entrance into this unnatural war his natural vivacity grew clouded, and a kind of sadness and dejection of spirit stole upon him which he had never been used to. * * * This grew into a perfect habit of uncheerfulness ; and he who had been so exactly easy and affable to all men, that his face and countenance was always present and vacant to his company, and held any cloudiness and less pleasantness of the visage a kind of moroseness or incivility, became on a sudden less communicable ; and thence very sad, pale, and exceedingly affected with the spleen. In his clothes and habit, which he had minded before with more neatness and industry and expense than is usual to so great a soul, he was not now only incurious but too negligent ; and in his reception of suitors and the necessary or casual addresses to his place, so quick, and sharp, and severe, that there wanted not some men—strangers to his name and disposition—who believed him proud and imperious, from which no mortal man was ever more free.

* * * * *

“ When there was any overture or hope of peace he would be more easy and vigorous, and exceedingly solicitous to press anything which he thought might promote it ; and sitting among his friends often after a deep silence and frequent sighs, would with a shrill and sad accent ingeminate the word ‘ Peace ! Peace ! ’ and would passionately profess that the very agony of the war, and the calamities and desolation the kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart !

* * * * *

“ In the morning before the battle, as always upon action, he was very cheerful, and put himself into the first ranks of the Lord Byron’s regiment, then advancing upon the enemy, who had lined the hedges on both sides with musketeers, from whence he was shot with a musket, and in the instant fell

from his horse. * * * Thus died that incomparable young man in the four-and-thirtieth year of his age, having so much dispatched the true business of life, that the eldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocence: whosoever leads such a life needs be the less anxious upon how short warning it is taken from him."

I had thought to insert as a companion picture Lord Clarendon's character of Hampden, but I find on reference that it does less justice to its subject and to its author. Such is party spirit!

The second battle of Newbury was fought about a twelve-month after, the King having come to relieve Donnington Castle, and being suddenly attacked by Waller while at Mr. Doleman's house at Shaw.

I cannot attempt to give more than a brief description of the principal scene of action.

Shaw House is a stately specimen of Tudor architecture, with bay windows, porch and pinnacles, surrounded by magnificent trees, many of which must have been in existence two centuries ago, the clear bright stream of the Lamborne—that Lamborne which a thousand of the train-bands forded the morning of the combat—flowing peacefully through the park, and the entrenchments thrown up for the defence of the mansion, now forming the turf boundaries of a bright flower garden and a velvet bowling-green. A brass plate near an upper window now overhanging the brilliant beds of scarlet geranium and golden calceolaria, mark the place where a cannon-ball lodged which was fired at the King as he was shaving in his chamber, and various other reliques of sharp attack and desperate resistance are carefully preserved in the house, the condition of which, so perfect in its venerable antiquity, free alike from any symptom of decay or any token of modern renovation, does the highest honour to Mr. Eyre, the present possessor. It would be difficult to point to a spot that appeals more forcibly to the imagination, or is more fitted to be the scene of stirring deeds. Just so it might have looked when the forces of Waller appeared before it, and the train-bands, no longer the scoffed-at holiday soldiers, waded through the stream.

No great result followed: the King with Prince Charles,

then a boy, maintaining his ground through the day, and retreating towards Oxford during the following night ; but the general effect, as through the whole contest, was disastrous to his cause. Cromwell (for that no association may be wanting, that great name appears on this occasion,) accused Manchester in the Commons of having suffered the royal army to escape through cowardice and lukewarmness, adding that he himself went to him and showed how they might be defeated, and “desired him if he would give him leave, with his own brigade of horse to charge the King’s army in their retreat, and the Earl, with the rest of his army, might look on if he thought fit.”

Although the result on the side of the Cavaliers was called by their enemies an escape, and must, perhaps, be considered as a retreat, yet the Royalists could boast, as usual, many instances of individual bravery. Colonel Lisle, in three successful charges near Shaw House, in the first charge, “used for his field-word, ‘For the Crown ;’ in the second, ‘For Prince Charles ;’ in the third, ‘For the Duke of York.’ Had the enemy returned, he had resolved to have gone over all the King’s children until he had not left one rebel to fight against the crown or the royal progeny.” Lisle himself fought without defensive armour, and having laid aside his buff doublet, led on his men “in a good Holland shirt,” a mode not uncommonly adopted by the Cavaliers, for the purpose of inspiring their followers with courage, and evincing their own contempt of danger.

The defence of Donnington Castle is one of the most memorable stories of this memorable war. Situate on an abrupt and lofty eminence, this fortress, of which nothing now remains but two towers on either side of an arched gateway and a beautiful hall immediately behind the entrance, was of considerable importance as commanding the main roads between London and the West frequently traversed by the Parliamentarians, and the road between Oxford and Wallingford the royal strongholds.

A small garrison was thrown into it by the King at the commencement of the contest ; and although besieged with more or less activity to the end, Colonel Boys contrived to maintain the place till the very last, only surrendering it when every other fortress had yielded, and all hope was lost.

At one time Colonel Horton, after a long blockade, battered it with cannon for twelve days, beating down three towers and a part of the wall. He then summoned the Governor in form, offering quarter if the place were given up by twelve o'clock the next day. Boys treated this summons, as he had done all former ones, with contempt, and returned for answer that he would neither give nor receive quarter. The assaults of the besiegers were generally followed by sallies and skirmishes, and endeavours to take the place by sap were equally unsuccessful. A field near the Castle is still called Dalbier's Meadow, in remembrance of one of the Parliamentary leaders who established a battery there; Fairfax himself was amongst the besiegers; and the day after the second battle of Newbury the whole army appeared before the Castle and summoned the Governor and his garrison to surrender to them, or they would not leave one stone upon another; to which Sir John Boys (having no other means of reward, Charles appears to have knighted this brave soldier) returned this laconic and spirited answer: "That he was not bound to repair the Castle, but by God's help he would keep the ground afterwards."

The siege, however, with all its glories, forms but a part of the glory of Donnington. It is said, upon evidence which appears incontestible, that the father of English poetry, almost of the English language, Geoffrey Chaucer, once gazed from this fair hill, and inhabited these massive towers. Godwin, who certainly spared no pains in the investigation, and a host of biographers and antiquaries, assume it as an undoubted fact; and local tradition—no mean authority in local questions—comes in aid of their assertion. A noble grove of oaks about half-way down the hill has always borne the name of Chaucer's Grove, and "Chaucer's Head" served as the sign of an old public-house which existed during the present century.

The scene is worthy of the poet. The old castle stands on the brow of a lofty eminence, whose picturesque abruptness may in some places perhaps have been assisted by art, as the steepness of the hill must have formed the chief defence of the fortress. But nature has long resumed her rights. The precipitous ascent is everywhere carpeted with turf of the richest verdure, garlanded with hawthorn and trailing plants, and interspersed with forest trees of the noblest growth. The

outer wall of the castle, enclosing the whole table-land of the hill-top, levelled with the earth in many places, and ruinous in all, has been taken down and replaced by a lower fence composed of the original stones, and clothed with evergreens surrounding a tasteful flower-garden. The towers, too, although still bearing visible marks of the ravages of war, have been repaired and wreathed with ivy ; and the care taken of this venerable ruin is most honourable to Mr. Hartley, in whose family it has long been. One of the towers, containing a geometrical staircase, had its walls torn asunder, exposing the steep stone steps, although of such massive strength that it seems like rending a solid rock. The other, less injured by the besieging army, is pierced with loop-holes, mere slits on the outer side, but gradually widening within ; and there, no doubt, has stood many a marksman, matchlock in hand, picking off the Roundheads in the valley below.

These towers with their battlements, and the deep, arched entrance, with the marks of the portcullis still visible, and a basket of shot picked up about the place standing within the gate, speak of little but war in its sternest form ; but the little hall, with its beautiful groined roof, and a certain mixture of rude splendour and homely comfort, which makes it even now a most covetable apartment, tells of the genial poet whose healthy, cordial, hearty spirit, must have made him the delight of every board, and most especially of his own.

I was much tempted to extract some passage in harmony with this feeling ; some bright and life-like portrait from the description of the Canterbury Pilgrims, or that inimitable character of the Good Parson, which amongst its innumerable merits has none higher than the proof it affords of Chaucer's own love of piety and virtue. But these fine fragments are too well known. I subjoin (taking no other freedom than that of changing the orthography) one of my own favourite bits, less familiar probably to the general reader, but full, as it seems to me, of tenderness, pathos, and truth.

Custance and her infant are banished by her husband, and sent adrift in a vessel.

Weepen both young and old in all that place,
When that the King this cursed letter sent :
And Custance with a deadly pale face.

The fourthe day toward the ship she went ;
 But nathelss she tak'th in good intent
 The will of Christ, and kneeling on the strand
 She saide : " Lord, aye welcome be thy sond.

He that me kepte from the false blame
 While I was in the land amonges you,
 He can me keep from harm and else from shame
 In the salt sea, although I see not how ;
 As strong as ever he was, he is yet now ;
 In him trust I, and in his Mother dear ;
 That is to me my sail and eke my steer."

Her little child lay weeping in her arm ;
 And kneeling, piteously to him she said—
 " Peace, little son, I will do thee no harm."
 With that, her kerchief off her head she braid,
 And over his little eyen she it laid,
 And in her arm she lulleth it full fast,
 And into th' Heaven her eyen up she cast.

' Mother,' quod she, ' and maiden bright Mary !
 Soth is that thorough woman's eggment
 Mankind was lorn, and damned aye to die,
 For which thy child was on a cross yrent ;
 Thy blissful eyen saw all his torment ;
 Then there is no comparison between
 Thy woe, and any woe men may sustain.

Thou saw'st thy child yslain before thine eyen,
 And yet now liveth my little child parfay :
 Now, lady bright ! to whom all woeful cryen,
 Thou glory of womanhood, thou faire May !
 Thou haven of refute, bright star of day !
 Rue on my child, that of thy gentleness
 Ruest on every rueful in distress.

' O little child ; alas ! what is thy guilt
 That never wroughtest sin as yet, pardie ?
 Why will thy harde father have thee spilt ?
 O mercy, deare Constable ! ' quod she,
 ' As let my little child dwell here with thee ;
 And if thou dar'st not saven him from blame
 So kiss him ones in his fathers name.'

Therewith she looketh backward to the land
 And saide, ' Farewell, husband rutheless !'
 And up she rose and walked down the strand
 Toward the ship ; her followeth all the press.
 And ever she prayeth her child to hold his peace,
 And tak'th her leave, and with a holy intent
 She blesseth her, and into the ship she went.

Victailed was the ship, it is no dредe,
 Abundantly for her a full long space ;
 And other necessaries that should need

She had enow, heried be Godde's grace :
For wind and weather, Almighty God purchase,
And bring her home ! I can no better say,
But in the sea she driveth forth her way.

It must be remembered that both the poet and his heroine were Roman Catholics, and that a Roman Catholic mother would naturally pray to the Virgin for her child.

I could not help wondering, as my kind host and I stood together under that groined roof, whether any of the monks of Chaucer's day—for in Chaucer's time there was an ecclesiastical establishment at the bottom of the hill on whose foundation indeed, and probably comprising part of the walls, the beautiful mansion called the Priory now stands;—I could not help wondering whether any of the monks of that day were as well suited to the old bard as its present master would undoubtedly have proved; and from wondering I got to wishing that four centuries could have been annihilated, and Geoffrey Chaucer and John Hughes have been placed each in his own residence with only that beautiful winding up-hill road between them; neighbours hardly a mile apart. How they would have given each other legend for legend, tale for tale, wisdom for wisdom, song for song, jest for jest! In his one great art Chaucer would of course have had the better—indeed of whom except of Shakespeare and Milton would he not? But my friend would have made it up in his infinite variety. To say nothing of the classical learning for which he has always been renowned, a scholar amongst scholars; does he not write and talk as a native nearly all the languages of Europe, all certainly that have a literature to tempt to the acquirement? Was not his "Provence and the Rhone" almost the only book ever praised in the "Waverley Novels?" Does not he contrive in his journals to make his pen do double duty as sketcher and writer? And are not those pen and ink drawings of his something astonishing for spirit and truth? Is he not also an artist in wood, embroidering his oaken wainscoats with every quirk and quiddity that comes into his head from a comic masque to an old English motto? Is he not such a reciter that he can make people laugh till they cry with his fun, and afraid to go to bed with his ghost stories? Can the very beasts of the field resist him? Did not he frighten me out of my wits, by

calling around him all the wild cattle of Highclere from the box of his own carriage ? Unhappy creatures ! he enchanted them with his mimicry till they took him for one of themselves. Is there anything he cannot do ? that is the fitter question. Cannot he, if he hears a German soldier in a barrack-yard singing an old song whilst polishing his musket, note down the air, retain the words, put them into English verse adapted to the tune, and sing it as heartily as the soldier could have done for the life of him ? Did he not do so by the ballad of "Prince Eugene," said to have been composed words and air by one of the Prince's old troopers, and long as popular in the German army as "Tom Bowling" or "Tom Tough" amongst the British tars. Here is Mr. Hughes's version :—

Prince Eugene, our noble leader,
Made a vow in death to bleed, or
Win the Emperor back Belgrade :
"Launch pontoons, let all be ready
To bear our ordnance safe and steady
Over the Danube"—thus he said.

There was mustering on the border
When our bridge in marching order
Breasted first the roaring stream ;
Then at Semlin, vengeance breathing,
We encamped to scourge the heathen
Back to Mahound and fame redeem.

'T was on August one and twenty,
Scouts with glorious tidings plenty
Galloped in through storm and rain ;
Turks they swore three hundred thousand
Marched to give our Prince a rouse, and
Dared us forth to battle-plain.

Then at Prince Eugene's head quarters
Met our fine old fighting Tartars,
Generals and Field-Marshalls all ;
Every point of war debated,
Each in his turn the signal waited!
Forth to march and on to fall.

For the onslaught all were eager
When the word sped round our leaguer :
" Soon as the clock chimes twelve to-night
Then bold hearts sound boot and saddle,
Stand to your arms and on to battle,
Every one that has hands to fight ! "

Musqueteers, horse, yagers, forming
 Sword in hand each bosom warming,
 Still as death we all advance ;
 Each prepared come blows or booty
 German-like to do our duty,
 Joining hands in the gallant dance.

Our cannoneers, those tough old heroes,
 Struck a lusty peal to cheer us,
 Firing ordnance great and small ;
 Right and left our cannon thundered
 Till the Pagans quaked and wondered,
 And by platoons began to fall.

On the right, like a lion angered,
 Bold Eugene cheered on the bold vanguard ;
 Ludovic spurred up and down,
 Crying "On, boys, every hand to 't,
 Brother Germans, nobly stand to 't,
 Charge them home for our old renown !"

Gallant Prince ! he spoke no more ; he
 Fell in early youth and glory,
 Struck from his horse by some curst ball :
 Great Eugene long sorrowed o'er him,
 For a brother's love he bore him,
 Every soldier mourned his fall.

In Waradin we laid his ashes ;
 Cannon peals and musket flashes
 O'er his grave due honours paid :
 Then the old Black Eagle flying,
 All the Pagan powers defying,
 On we marched and stormed Belgrade.

Mr. Hughes was honoured with the friendship of Sir Walter Scott, and amongst the most valued treasures of the Priory is the last portrait ever taken of the great novelist.

XXXVIII.

UNRECOGNISED POETS.

GEORGE DARLEY—THE REV. EDWARD WILLIAM BARNARD.

UNRECOGNISED Poets ! many, very many are there doubtless of the world's finest spirits, to whom these words may be truly applied ; poets whom the world has not known, or has refused to acknowledge. If Wordsworth had died fifty years ago, after the "Excursion," after "Ruth," after the "Yew Trees," after the very finest of his shorter poems had been

published, *he* would have been amongst the disowned. But he was strong of frame and of heart, vigorous and self-reliant ; competence came to him early ; moreover he dwelt in the healthy atmosphere of the northern hills, and heard no more of the critical onslaught than served to nerve him for fresh battles. So he lived through the time of tribulation, and gathered from the natural effect of the reaction more of fame and praise than would have fallen to his share had he won his laurels without the long probation and the fierce contest which preceded his recognition as the "Great High Priest of all the Nine."

Men of less power and of less faith die of the trial. Of such was George Darley. Gifted certainly with high talents, and with the love of song, which to enthusiastic youth seems the only real vocation, he offended his father, a wealthy alderman of Dublin, by devoting his whole existence to poetry, and found, when too late, that the fame for which he had sacrificed worldly fortune eluded his pursuit. It is impossible not to sympathise with such a trial ; not to feel how severe, must be the sufferings of a man conscious of no common power, who sees day by day the popularity for which he yearns won by far inferior spirits, and works which he despises passing through edition after edition, whilst his own writings are gathering dust upon the publisher's shelves, or sold as waste paper to the pastry cook or the chandler. What wonder that the disenchanted poet should be transmuted into a cold and caustic critic, or that the disappointed man should withdraw into the narrowest limits of friendly society, a hermit in the centre of London !

To add to these griefs, Mr. Darley was afflicted by a natural infirmity not uncommon with men of high talent, and nervous and susceptible temperament. He stammered so much as to render conversation painful and difficult to himself, and distressing to his companions. The consciousness of this impediment (which he called his mask) increased its intensity, causing him to shrink from all unnecessary communications, except with the few to whom he was familiarly accustomed, and of whose appreciation he was sure. They seem to have esteemed him much.

I myself never saw him. But I suppose I owed to the too partial report of some of his own most valued friends the

honour of being admitted amongst his correspondents. Much as I admired him, and sincerely grateful as I felt for his notice, I confess that these elaborate epistles frightened me not a little. Startling to receive, these epistles, resembling the choicest parts of the choicest orations, were terrible to answer ; and as my theory as to letter-writing is that it should be like the easiest, most careless off-hand talk, and my practice full of blots and blunders, and of every sort of impertinence that a pen can by any chance commit, is apt to carry out **my** theory even to excess, I have no doubt but I often returned the compliment by startling my correspondent.

Besides these letters, Mr. Darley sent me a little volume called "Sylvia or the May Queen," a dramatic pastoral full of lyrical beauty, a tragedy on the story of Thomas-à-Becket, of which the most original scene is one in which Richard is represented as a boy, a boy foreshowing the man, the playful, grand, and noble cub, in which we see the future lion ; and an unpublished poem, called "Nepenthe," as different in appearance from the common run of books "printed for private distribution," which are usually models of typography, of paper, and of binding as it is in subject and in composition. Never was so thorough an abnegation of all literary coxcombry as was exhibited in the outward form of this "Nepenthe," unless there may be some suspicion of affectation in the remarkable homeliness, not to say squalidness, of the strange little pamphlet as compared with the grace and refinement of the poetry. Printed with the most imperfect and broken types, upon a coarse discoloured paper, like that in which a country shopkeeper puts up his tea, with two dusky leaves of a still dingier hue, at least a size too small, for cover, and garnished at top and bottom with a running margin in his own writing, such (resembling nothing but a street ballad or an old "broadside") is the singular disguise (ah, Mr. Darley might well have called that a mask !) of the striking poem of which I am about to offer an extract. There is no reading the whole, for there is an intoxication about it that turns one's brain. Such a poet could never have been popular. But he was a poet.

The first page is headed as follows, in Mr. Darley's handwriting, "Seeking the panacea called 'Nepenthe,' the wanderer finds himself on the hill of Solitude."

NEPENTHE.

Over a blooming land, untrod
 By heavier foot than bird or bee
 Lays on the grassy-bosomed sod,
 I passed one day in reverie :
 High on his unpavilioned throne
 The heaven's hot tyrant sat alone,
 And like the fabled king of old,
 Was turning all he touched to gold ;
 The glittering fountains seemed to pour
 Steep downward rills of molten ore,
 Glassily trickling smooth between
 Broom-shaded banks of golden green,
 And o'er the yellow pasture straying,
 Dallying still yet undelaying,
 In hasty trips from side to side
 Footing adown their steepy slide,
 Headlong impetuously playing
 With the flowery border pied,
 That edged the rocky mountain stair,
 They pattered down incessant there,
 To lowlands sweet and calm and wide.
 With golden lip and glistening bell
 Bowed every bee-cup on the fell,
 Whate'er its native unsunned hue,
 Snow-white or crimson or cold blue ;
 Even the black lustres of the sloe
 Glanced as they sided to the glow,
 And furze in russet frock arrayed
 With saffron knots, like shepherd maid,
 Broadly tricked out her rough brocade.
 The singèd mosses curling here,
 A golden fleece too short to shear !
 Crumbled to sparkling dust beneath
 My light step on that sunny heath.

Light ! for the ardour of the clime
 Made rare my spirit, that sublime
 Bore me as buoyant as young Time
 Over the green earth's grassy prime,
 Ere his slouched wing caught up her slime ;
 And sprang I not from clay and crime,
 Had from those humming beds of thyme
 Lifted me near the stony chime
 To learn an empyrean rhyme.

No melody beneath the moon
 Sweeter than this deep runnel tune !
 Here on the greensward grown hot gray,
 Crisp as the unshorn desert hay,
 Where his moist pipe the dulcet rill
 For humorous grasshopper doth fill,

That spits himself from blade to blade
 By long o'er-rest uneasy made ;
 Here ere the stream by fountain pushes
 Lose himself brightly in the rushes
 With butterfly path among the bushes,
 I'll lay me on these mosses brown,
 Murmuring beside his murmurs down,
 And from the liquid tale he tells
 Glean out some broken syllables ;
 Or close mine eyes in dreamy swoon,
 As hoarse winding deep Gihooon
 Soothes with the hum his idle pain
 The melancholy Tartar swain,
 Sole mark on that huge-meadowed plain !

Hie on to great Ocean ! hie on ! hie on !
 Fleet as water can gallop, hie on !
 Hear ye not through the ground
 How the sea-trumpets sound
 Round the sea-monarch's shallop, hie on !

Hie on to brave Ocean ! hie on ! hie on !
 From the sleek mountain levels, hie on !
 Hear ye not in the boom
 Of the water-bell's womb
 Pleasant whoop to sea-revels, hie on !

Hie on to bright Ocean ! hie on ! hie on !
 'Tis the store of rich waters, hie on !
 Hear ye not the rough sands
 Rolling gold on the strands,
 For poor Earth's sons and daughters, hie on !

Hie on to calm Ocean ! hie on ! hie on !
 Summer rest from earth-riot, hie on !
 Hear ye not the smooth tide
 With deep murmur and wide
 Call ye down to his quiet, hie on !

Thus to the babbling streamlet elves
 To haste them down the slopes and shelves,
 Methought some Naiad of their fall
 In her bright dropping sparry hall,
 Sang to her glassy virginal.

" Perchance to me monition sweet ? "

I started upright to my feet
 Attent : 'twas but a fancy dream !
 I only heard in measure meet
 The pulses of the fountain beat,
 As onward prest the throbbing stream.
 Fair fell no less my fancy dream !
 I have been still led like a child
 My heedless wayward path and wild

Through this rough world by febler clues
(So they were bright) than rainbows' dews
Spun by the insect gossamer
To climb with through the ropy air.

Fair fall ye, then, my fairy dream !
I'll with this labyrinthian stream,
Where'er it flow, where'er it cease,
There be my pathway and my peace !

Swift as a star falls through the night,
Swift as a sun-shot dart of light
Down from the hill's heaven-touching height
The streamlet vanished from my sight.

The poet is carried away by the phoenix, and laid at the bottom of her tree, in *Arabia Felix*, where he beholds her dissolution.

O blest unfabled Incense Tree
That burns in glorious Araby,
With red scent chalicing the air,
Till earth-life grow Elysian there !

Half buried to her flaming breast
In this bright tree she makes her nest,
Hundred-sunned Phoenix ! where she must
Crumble at length to hoary dust !

Her gorgeous death-bed ! her rich pyre
Burnt up with aromatic fire !

Her urn set high from spoiler men !
Her birth-place when self-born again !

The mountainless green wilds among
Here ends she her unechoing song !

With amber tears and odorous sighs
Mourned by the desert where she dies !

Laid like the young fawn mossily
In sungreen vales of Araby

I woke, hard by the Phoenix tree
That with shadeless boughs flamed over me ;

And upward called by a dumbery
With moon broad orbs of wonder, I

Beheld the immortal bird on high
Glassing the great sun in her eye ;

Steadfast she gazed upon his fire
Still her destroyer and her sire.

As if to his her soul of flame
Had flown already whence it came ;

Like those who sit and glare so still
Intense with their death-struggle till
We touch and curdle at their chill !

But breathing yet while she doth burn
The deathless Daughter of the Sun !

Slowly to crimson embers turn
The beauties of the brightsome one.

O'er the broad nest her silver wings
 Shook down their wasteful glitterings ;
 Her brindled neck high arched in air
 Like a small rainbow faded there.
 But brighter glowed her plumy crown
 Moulderling to golden ashes down ;
 With fume of sweet woods to the skies,
 Pure as a saint's adoring sighs,
 Warm as a prayer in Paradise,
 Her life-breath rose in sacrifice !
 The while with shrill triumphant tone
 Sounding aloud, aloft, alone,
 Ceaseless her joyful death-wail she
 Sang to departing Araby !

Deep melancholy wonder drew
 Tears from my heart-spring at that view ;
 Like cresset shedding its last flare
 Upon some wistful mariner,
 The bird fast blending with the sky
 Turned on me her dead-gazing eye
 Once—and as surge to shallow spray
 Sank down to vapoury dust away.

O fast her amber blood doth flow
 From the heart-wounded Incense Tree,
 Fast as earth's deep embosomed woe
 In silent rivulets to the sea !

Beauty may weep her fair first-born
 Perchance in as resplendent tears,
 Such golden dew-drops bow the corn
 When the stern sickleman appears.

But oh ! such perfume to a bower
 Never allured sweet-seeking bee
 As to sip fast that nectarous shower
 A thirstier minstrel drew in me.

Mr. Darley's death was even more lonely than his life. The kind and admirable persons who had been his best and truest friends in London, wrote to his brother in Dublin as soon as the imminent danger of his last illness was known. No answer arrived. He died ; and they wrote again still more pressingly, and then, after a delay which rendered his interment inevitable, it was discovered that the brother in Ireland lay dead also.

The story of Mr. Barnard is very different. Eminent for scholarship, rich in friends, easy in circumstances, secure of preferment in the sacred profession to which he was an honour, and married to the lovely woman whom he so truly

loved, it is probable that the very felicity of his lot prevented him from devoting himself to literary pursuits. Excepting the light and pleasant task of translating the Latin poems of Flaminio, and the composition of such short lyrics as were suggested by the events or the feelings of the hour, he never went beyond the plans and projects with which most men of talent amuse their leisure. Even such verse as he did write remained in manuscript until it was collected and printed after his death by his accomplished father-in-law, Mr. Archdeacon Wrangham.

Few as they are, these lyrics are remarkable, not only for grace and beauty, but for a vigour of thought, a fulness, a body, very unusual in occasional verses. Had longer life been lent to Mr. Barnard, we might have boasted another writer of high and pure poetry.

MY GREYHOUNDS.

Oh ! dear is the naked wold to me
 Where I move alone in my majesty !
 Thyme and cistus kiss my feet,
 And spread around their incense sweet,
 The laverock springing from his bed,
 Pours royal greeting o'er my head ;
 My gallant guards, my greyhounds tried
 March in order by my side ;
 And everything that's earthly born,
 Wealth and pomp, and pride, I scorn—
 And chiefly thee,
 Who lifts so high thy little horn,
 Philosophy.

Wilt thou say that life is short ;
 That wisdom loves not hunter's sport,
 But virtue's golden fruitage rather
 Hopes in cloistered cell to gather ?
 Gallant greyhounds, tell her, here
 Trusty faith and love sincere,
 Here do grace and zeal abide,
 And humbly keep their master's side.
 Bid her send whate'er hath sold
 Human hearts—lust, power and gold—
 Accursed train !
 And blush to find that on the wold
 They bribe in vain.

Then let her preach ! The Muse and I
 Will turn to Goshawk, Gaze and Guy ;
 And give to worth its proper place
 Though found in nature's lowliest race.

And when we would be great or wise,
 Lo ! o'er our heads are smiling skies ;
 And thence we'll draw instruction true
 That worldly science never knew,
 Then let her argue as she will ;—
 I 'll wander with my greyhounds still
 (Halloo ! halloo !)
 And hunt for health on the breeze-worn hill,
 And wisdom too.

THE LAUNCH OF THE NAUTILUS.

Up with thy thin transparent sail
 Thou tiny mariner !—The gale
 Comes gently from the land and brings
 The odour of all lovely things
 That zephyr in his wanton play
 Scatters in spring's triumphant way ;—
 Of primrose pale, and violet,
 And young anemone, beset
 By thousand spikes of every hue,
 Purple and scarlet, white and blue :
 And every breeze that sweeps the earth
 Brings the sweet sounds of love and mirth ;
 The shrilly pipe of things unseen
 That pitter in the meadow green ;
 The linnet's love-sick melody,
 The laverock's carol loud and high ;
 And mellowed, as from distance borne
 The music of the shepherd's horn.

Up, little Nautilus !—Thy day
 Of life and joy is come ;—Away !
 The ocean's flood that gleams so bright
 Beneath the morning's ruddy light
 With gentlest surge scarce ripples o'er
 The lucid gems that pave the shore ;
 Each billow wears its little spray
 As maids wear wreaths on holiday ;
 And maid ne'er danced on velvet green
 More blithely round the May's young queen,
 Than thou shalt dance on yon bright sea
 That woos thy prow so lovingly.
 Then lift thy sail !—'Tis shame to rest
 Here on the sand thy pearly breast.
 Away ! thou first of mariners,
 Give to the wind all idle fears ;
 Thy freight demands no jealous care ;
 Yet navies might be proud to bear
 The wondrous wealth, the unbought spell
 That load thy ruby-cinctured shell.
 A heart is there to nature true,
 Which wrath or envy never knew ;

A heart that calls no creature foe,
And ne'er designed a brother's woe ;
A heart whose joy o'erflows its home
Simply because sweet spring is come.

Up, beauteous Nautilus ! Away !
The idle Muse that chides thy stay
Shall watch thee long with anxious eye
O'er thy bright course delighted fly ;
And when black storms deform the main,
Cry welcome to the sands again !
Heaven grant that she through life's wild flow
May sail as innocent as thou ;
And homeward turned like thee may find
Sure refuge from the wave and wind.

TO MY HOME.

Yon old grey wall, whose gable high
Lifts the Redeemer's sign,
Whose tendrils green like tracery
O'er arch and mullion twine—
It is indeed a holy place ;
For God Himself hath deigned to grace
This humble home of mine ;
And thoughts of Him are blended fair
With every joy I've tasted there.

The one best friend whose modest worth
E'en from my praises flies ;
The babe whose soul is budding forth
From her blue smiling eyes ;
And prattling still the sturdy boy
Who climbs my knee with heart of joy
To gain his little prize—
Their looks of love how can I see
Nor think, great Sire of Love, on Thee ?

Pride enters not yon peaceful room ;
But books and arts abound ;
Nor there do vain Penates come
To reign—'tis holy ground !
And duly, Lord, when evening brings
Release from toil on balmy wings,
An household band is found
To raise Thy throne, and offer there
The gift Thou lov'st, Domestic Prayer.

Within all studies end in Thee ;
And when abroad I rove,
There's not a herb, a flower, a tree,
That speaks not of Thy love ;
There's not a leaf, that whirled on high
Wanders along the stormy sky,
That hath not words to prove

How like would be my restless lot,
If Grace Divine upheld me not !

Oh ! look upon yon glorious scene,
Wood, hill, and wave survey ;
Mark every path where God hath been,
And own His wondrous w^ry.
For me I daily come to bless,
Dear landscape, all thy loveliness ;
And dare not turn away

Till I have spoken the Psalmist's line,
"These gracious works, dread Lord, are Thine !"

My Home ! my Home ! I've paused awhile
In many a stranger land,
And seen in all boon Nature smile
Beneath her Maker's hand ;
But never since calm Reason took
From Fancy's clutch her rhyming book,
A joyful resting planned—
Till here the blessed scene I laid,
Here in mine own romantic shade.

My Home ! my Home ! oh ! ever dear
Thy hallowed scenes shall be ;
In joy or grief, in hope or fear,
My spirit clings to thee.
I deem my home an emblem meet
Of that enduring last retreat
From pain and passion free,
Where Peace shall fix her bright abode,
And yield her followers up to God.

To Mr. Barnard, also, I was personally a stranger. So I was to the excellent friend and delightful correspondent, Mr. Archdeacon Wrangham, to whose kindness I owe the possession of his poems. Twice I was about to visit the Archdeacon, and twice Death came between. The first time he invited me to his prebendal residence at Chester, to meet another dear and most valued correspondent and friend, Mrs. Hemans ; he even proposed to come as far as Oxford to fetch me. But my mother was already seized by the illness from which she never recovered ; and the three friends, of whom I am the only survivor, and of whom none was then old, said all—Another time ! None of us foresaw how soon the youngest and the most gifted of the three should die in her Irish home ; and the two that remained had little heart to plan joyous meetings. But nine years ago, when my dear father was also taken from me, the good Archdeacon mixed with his condolences an invitation to visit him at

Hunmanby. The letter was singularly interesting, telling of his own father's death just after his early Cambridge triumphs, and of the strange and solemn mixture of that great grief with his joy. Singularly enough, with that kind and gracious invitation to the vicarage at Hunmanby came one equally gracious and kind from the head of my own family, Admiral Osbaldiston Mitford, to visit him and Mrs. Mitford at Hunmanby Hall. I answered both letters by return of post ; and before that to my venerable friend reached its destination, he too was dead.

Let me add a less gloomy recollection of this accomplished scholar, who was an eminent book collector. About thirty years ago, one of the cleverest writers of the day having published (as sometimes happens) a very silly book, the Archdeacon hastened to secure it for his library. "What could induce you to purchase that nonsense ?" inquired a friend. "Because it is so bad that it is sure to become scarce," was the reply. The prediction has been verified to the letter. I should not wonder if that copy were an unique.

XXXIX.

AMERICAN PROSE WRITERS.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

IN spite of her apparent barrenness at the late Exhibition—a barrenness which probably resulted mainly from the actual riches of that vast country, its prodigious territory, and its still growing youth—in spite of our susceptibilities—and in spite of her own—America is a great nation, and the Americans are a great people ; and if that Fair of the World had been a book fair, as at Leipsic. I suspect that we should have seen our kinsfolk over the water cutting a very good figure with their literary ware.

Certain it is, that when a people, hardly seventy years old, who have still living amongst them men that remember when their republic was a province, can claim for themselves such divines as Dr. Channing, and my friend Professor Norton, the friend of Mrs. Hemans ; such an historian as Mr. Prescott ;

and such an orator as Daniel Webster, they have good right to be proud of their sons of the soil.

To say nothing of these ornaments of our common language, or of the naturalists Wilson and Audubon—are they American?—they are worth fighting for; or of the travellers, Dana, Stephens, and Willis, who are certainly transatlantic; or of the fair writers, Mrs. Sigourney and Miss Sedgwick, both my friends; or of the poor Margaret Fuller, drowned so deplorably only the other day, with her husband and her infant, on her own shores (her Italian husband said only the day before leaving Florence that it had been predicted to him that he should die at sea); or of the great historian of Spanish literature, Mr. Ticknor (another friend!); or of a class of writers in which New England is rich—orator-writers, whose eloquence, first addressed to large audiences, is at once diffused and preserved by the press—witness the orations of Mr. Sumner, and the lectures of Mr. Whipple and Mr. Giles; to say nothing of these volumes, which will bear a competition with any of their class in the elder country, let us look at the living novelists, and see if they be of an ordinary stamp.

The author of the "Sketch-book" is almost as much a classic with us as in his own country. That book, indeed, and one or two that succeeded it, were so purely English in style and feeling, that when their success—their immense and deserved success—induced the reprint of some drolleries which had for subject New York in its Dutch state, it was difficult to believe that they were by the same author. Since then, Mr. Washington Irving, having, happily for literature, filled a diplomatic post in Spain, has put forth other works, half Spanish, half Moorish, equally full of local colour and local history,—books as good as history, that almost make us live in the Alhambra, and increase our sympathy with the tasteful and chivalrous people who planned its halls and gardens. Then he returned home; and there he has done for the backwoods and the prairies what he before did for the manor-house of England and the palace of Granada. Few, very few, can show a long succession of volumes so pure, so graceful, and so varied as Mr. Irving. To my poor cottage, rich only in printed paper, people often come to borrow books for themselves or their children. Sometimes they make their

own selection ; sometimes, much against my will, they leave the choice to me ; and in either case I know no works that are oftener lent than those that bear the pseudonym of Geoffrey Crayon.

Then Mr. Cooper ! original and natural as his own *Pioneers* ; adventurous as Paul Jones ; hardy as Long Tom ; persevering and indomitable as that Leather-stockting whom he has conducted through fifteen volumes without once varying from the admirable portrait which he originally designed. They say that he does not value our praise—that he has no appreciation for his appreciators. But I do not choose to believe such a scandal. It can only be a “they say.” He is too richly gifted to be wanting in sympathy even with his own admirers ; and if he have an odd manner of showing that sympathy, why it must pass as “Pretty Fanny’s way.” Since these light words were written, I grieve to say that Mr. Cooper is dead. I trust his gifted daughter will become his biographer. Few lives would be more interesting.

Next comes one with whom my saucy pen must take no freedom,—one good and grave, and pure and holy ; whose works, by their high aim and their fine execution, claim the respect of all. Little known by name, the excellently-selected reprints of my friend Mr. Chambers have made Mr. Ware’s letters from Palmyra and from Rome familiar to all who seek to unite the excitement of an early Christian story, a tale of persecution and of martyrdom, with a style and detail so full of calm and sober learning, that they seem literally saturated with classical lore. So entire is the feeling of scholarship pervading these two books, in one of which Zenobia appears in her beautiful Palmyra a powerful queen, in the other dragged through the streets of Rome a miserable captive, that we seem to be reading a translation from the Latin. There is not a trace of modern habits or modes of thinking ; and if Mr. Ware had been possessed by the monomania of Macpherson or of Chatterton, it would have rested with himself to produce these letters as a close and literal version of manuscripts of the third century.

Another talented romancer is Dr. Bird, whose two works on the conquest of Mexico have great merit, although hidden behind the mask of most unpromising titles (one of them is called, I think, “Abdallah the Moor ; or, the Infidel’s Doom”).

I never met with any one who had read them but myself, to whom that particular subject has an unfailing interest. His "Nick of the Woods," a striking but very painful Indian novel, and his description of those wonderful American caves, in which truth leaves fiction far behind, are generally known and duly appreciated.

These excellent writers have been long before the public; but a new star has lately sprung into light in the Western horizon, who, in a totally different manner—and nothing is more remarkable amongst all these American novelists than their utter difference from each other—will hardly fail to cast a bright illumination over both hemispheres. It is hardly two years since Mr. Hawthorne, until then known only by one or two of those little volumes which the sagacious hold as promises of future excellence, put forth that singular book, "The Scarlet Letter;" *à-propos* to which, Dr. Holmes, who so well knows the value of words, uses this significant expression:—

"I *snatch* the book along whose burning leaves
His scarlet web our wild romancer weaves."

And it is the very word. "We do *snatch* the book;" and until we have got to the end, very few of us, I apprehend, have sufficient strength of will to lay it down.

The story is of the early days of New England; those days when, as Mr. Whittier has shown in his clever mystification, called "Margaret Smith's Journal," the Pilgrim Fathers, just escaped from persecution in Europe, persecuted those who presumed to follow their example, and to exercise liberty of thought and worship in the new home of freedom. Lamentable inconsistency of human action! Nothing but the strongest historical evidence could make us believe that they who had cast away fortune and country, and every worldly good for conscience' sake, should visit with fire and faggot the peaceful Quaker and poor demented creatures accused of witchcraft, and driven by the accusation into the confession, perhaps into a diseased craving for the power and the crime. But so it is. Oppression makes oppression; persecution propagates persecution. There is no end to the evil when once engendered.

"The Scarlet Letter" is not, however, a story of witch, or of Quaker, although an atmosphere of sorcery seems to pervade the air, but one of that strict and rigid morality peculiar

to the Puritans, who loved to visit with legal penalties such sins as are now kept in check by public opinion. Accordingly, our first sight of Hester, is exposed upon a scaffold, wearing upon her breast a scarlet A, glittering with gold embroidery, and carrying in her arms a female infant. She had been sent, without her husband, under the protection of some of the elders of the colony, and the punishment was not merely caused by the birth of this child of shame, but by her resolute concealment of the partner of her guilt. Step by step, the reader becomes acquainted with the secret. The participator of her frailty was a young and eloquent preacher, famed not only for learning and talent, but for severe sanctity. The husband arrives under a false character, recognised only by the erring wife, before whom, cruel, vindictive, hating and hateful, he appears as a visible conscience ; and the sufferings of the proud and fiery Hester, enduring a daily martyrdom of shame and scorn, and of the seducer perishing under the terrible remorse of undeserved praise, respect, and honour, are amongst the finest and most original conceptions of tragic narrative. Detestable as the husband is, and with all the passionate truth that Mr. Hawthorne has thrown into the long agony of the seducer, we never, in our pity for the sufferer, lose our abhorrence of the sin.

Scarcely a twelvemonth has passed, and another New England story, "The House with the Seven Gables," has come to redeem the pledge of excellence given by the first.

In this tale, Fate plays almost as great a part as in a Greek Trilogy. Two centuries ago, a certain wicked and powerful Colonel Pyncheon, was seized with a violent desire to possess himself of a certain bit of ground, on which to build the large and picturesque wooden mansion from which the story takes its title. Master Maule, the original possessor, obstinate and poor, refused all offers of money for his land ; but being shortly afterwards accused, no one very well knows why, of the fashionable sin of witchcraft, the poor man is tried, condemned, and burnt ; the property forfeited and sold ; and the rich man's house erected without let or pause. But the shadow of a great crime has passed over the place. A bubbling spring, famous for the purity and freshness of its waters, turns salt and bitter, and the rich man himself—the great, powerful, wicked Colonel Pyncheon—is found dead in his own hall,

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stricken by some strange, sudden, mysterious death, on the very day of his taking possession, and when he had invited half the province to his house-warming. Both proprietors—the poor old wizard, and the wealthy Colonel—leave one child, and during two succeeding centuries these races, always distinct and peculiar, come at long intervals strangely across each other.

Nothing can exceed the skill with which this part of the book is managed. The story is not told ; we find it out ; we feel that there *is* a legend ; that some strange destiny has hovered over the old house, and hovers there still. The slightness of the means by which this feeling is excited is wonderful. The mixture of the grotesque and the supernatural in Hoffman and the German School, seems coarse and vulgar blundering in the comparison ; even the mighty magician of Udolpho, the Anne Radcliff whom the French quote with so much unction, was a bungler at her trade, when compared with the vague, dim, vapoury, impalpable ghastliness with which Mr. Hawthorne has contrived to envelope his narrative.

Two hundred years have passed. The Maules have disappeared ; and the Pyncheons are reduced, by the mysterious death of the last proprietor, to a poor old maid in extreme poverty, with little left but this decaying mansion ; a brother whom she is expecting home after a long imprisonment, also a mystery ; a Judge, flourishing and prosperous, in whom we at once recognise a true descendant of the wicked Colonel ; and a little New England girl, a country cousin, who is the veriest bit of life and light, the brightest beam of sunshine that has ever crossed the Atlantic. Monsieur Eugène Sue had some such inspiration when, in his very happiest moment, he painted Rigolette ; but this rose is fresher still. Her name (there is a great deal in names, let Juliet say what she will) is Phœbe. I am not going to tell the story of this book, but I must give one glimpse of Phœbe, although it will very inadequately convey the charm that extends over the whole volume ; and to make that understood, I must say that the poor old cousin Hepzibah, “Old Maid Pyncheon,” as she is called by her townsfolk—(I wonder whether the Americans do actually bestow upon all their single women that expressive designation : one has some right to be curious as to the titles

conferred upon one's own order ;)—“Old Maid Pyncheon” had that very day, for the purpose, as it afterwards appeared, of supporting the liberated prisoner, opened in this aristocratic mansion a little shop.—N.B. I had once a fancy to set up a shop myself, not quite of the same kind ; but there were other sorts of pride besides my own to be consulted, so beyond a jest, more than half-earnest, with a rich neighbour, who proposed himself as a partner, the fancy hardly came to words. Ah, I have a strong fellow-feeling for that poor Hepzibah—a decayed gentlewoman, elderly, ugly, awkward, near-sighted, cross ! I have a deep sympathy with “Old Maid Pyncheon,” as she appears on the morning of this great trial :

“Forth she steps into the dusky time-darkened passage ; a tall figure, clad in black silk, with a long and shrunken waist, feeling her way towards the stairs, like a near-sighted person, as in truth she is.

“We must linger a moment on the unfortunate expression of poor Hepzibah’s brow. Her scowl—as the world, or such part of it as sometimes caught a transitory glimpse of her at the window, wickedly persisted in calling it—her scowl had done Miss Hepzibah a very ill office in establishing her character as an ill-tempered old maid ; nor does it appear improbable that, by often gazing at herself in a dim looking-glass, and perpetually encountering her own frown within its ghostly sphere, she had been led to interpret her expression almost as unjustly as the world did. ‘How miserably cross I look,’ she must often have whispered to herself; and ultimately have fancied herself so by a sense of inevitable doom. But her heart never frowned. It was naturally tender, sensitive, and full of little tremors and palpitations ; all of which it retained, while her visage was growing perversely stern, and even fierce. Nor had Hepzibah ever any hardihood, except what came from the very warmest nook in her affections.

“All this time, however, we are loitering faint-heartedly on the threshold of our story. In very truth, we have a reluctance to disclose what Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon was about to do.

“It has already been observed, that in the basement story of the gable fronting on the street, an unworthy ancestor, nearly a century ago, had fitted up a shop. Ever since the

old gentleman retired from trade and fell asleep under his coffin-lid, not only the shop-door, but the inner arrangements had been suffered to remain unchanged, while the dust of ages gathered inch-deep over the shelves and counter, and partly filled an old pair of scales, as if it were of value enough to be weighed. It treasured itself up too in the half-open till, where there still lingered a base sixpence, worth *neither more nor less* than the hereditary pride that had here been put to shame. Such had been the condition and state of the little shop in old Hepzibah's childhood, when she and her brother used to play at hide-and-seek in its forsaken precincts. Such it had remained until within a few days past.

"But now, though the shop-window was still closely curtained from the public gaze, a remarkable change had taken place in its interior. The rich and heavy festoons of cobweb which it had cost a long ancestral succession of spiders their life's labour to spin and weave, had been carefully brushed away from the ceiling. The counter, shelves, and floor had all been scoured, and the latter was overstrewn with fresh blue sand. The brown scales, too, had evidently undergone rigid discipline in an unavailing effort to rub off the rust which, alas! had eaten through and through their substance. Neither was the little old shop any longer empty of merchantable goods. A curious eye, privileged to take an account of stock and investigate behind the counter, would have discovered a barrel—yea, two or three barrels and half ditto—one containing flour, another apples, and a third perhaps, Indian meal. There was likewise a square box of pine-wood full of soap in bars; also another of the same size, in which were tallow candles, ten to the pound. A small stock of brown sugar, some white beans and split peas, and a few other commodities of low price, and such as are constantly in demand, made up the bulkier portion of the merchandize. It might have been taken for a ghostly or phantasmagoric reflection of the old shopkeeper Pyncheon's shabbily-provided shelves, save that some of the articles were of a description and outward form which would hardly have been known in his day. For instance, there was a glass pickle-jar filled with fragments of Gibraltar rock; not indeed splinters of the veritable stone production of the famous fortress, but bits of delectable candy neatly done up in white paper. Jim Crow, moreover,

was seen executing his world-renowned dance in gingerbread. A party of leaden dragoons were seen galloping along one of the shelves in equipments and uniform of modern cut; and there were some sugar figures with no strong resemblance to the humanity of any epoch, but less unsatisfactorily representing our own fashions than those of a hundred years ago. Another phenomenon still more strikingly modern, was a package of lucifer matches, which in old times would have been thought actually to borrow their instantaneous flame from the nether fires of Tophet.

“ In short, to bring the matter at once to a point, it was incontrovertibly evident that somebody had taken the shop and fixtures of the long-retired and forgotten Mr. Pyncheon, and was about to renew the enterprise of that departed worthy with a different set of customers. Who could this bold adventurer be? And of all places in the world why had he chosen the House of the Seven Gables for the scene of his commercial speculations ?

“ We return to the elderly maiden. She at length withdrew her eyes from the dark countenance of the Colonel’s portrait, heaved a sigh—indeed her breast was a very cave of Æolus that morning—and stepped across the room on tip-toe, as is the customary gait of elderly women. Passing through an intervening passage, she opened a door which communicated with the shop just now so elaborately described, owing to the projection of the upper story, and still more to the dark shadow of the Pyncheon elm, which stood almost directly in front of the gable—the twilight here was still as much akin to night as morning. Another heavy sigh from Miss Hepzibah, after a moment’s pause on the threshold, peering towards the window with her near-sighted scowl, as if frowning down some bitter enemy, she projected herself into the shop. The haste, and, as it were, the galvanic impulse of the movement, were quite startling.

“ Nervously, in a sort of frenzy we might almost say, she began to busy herself in arranging some children’s playthings and other little wares on the shelves and at the shop-window. In the aspect of this dark-arrayed, pale-faced, ladylike old figure, there was a deeply tragic character that contrasted irreconcileably with the ludicrous pettiness of her employment. It seemed a strange anomaly, that so gaunt and

dismal a personage should take a toy in hand ; a miracle, that the toy did not vanish in her grasp ; a miserably absurd idea, that she should go on perplexing her stiff and sombre intellect with the question how to tempt little boys into her premises ! Yet such is undoubtedly her object. Now she places a gingerbread elephant against the window, but with so tremulous a touch that it tumbles upon the floor with the dismemberment of three legs and its trunk ; it has ceased to be an elephant, and has become a few bits of musty gingerbread. There again she has upset a tumbler of marbles, all of which roll different ways, and each individual marble, devil-directed, into the most difficult obscurity that it can find. Heaven help our poor old Hepzibah, and forgive us for taking a ludicrous view of her position ! As her rigid and rusty frame goes down upon its hands and knees in quest of the absconding marbles, we positively feel so much the more inclined to shed tears of sympathy from the very fact that we must needs turn aside and laugh at her. For here—and if we fail to impress it suitably upon the reader, it is our own fault and not that of the theme—here is one of the truest points of interest that occur in ordinary life. It was the final throe of what called itself old gentility. A lady, who had fed herself from childhood with the shadowy food of aristocratic reminiscences, and whose religion it was that a lady's hand soils itself immediately by doing aught for bread, this born lady, after sixty years of harrowing means, is fain to step down from her pedestal of imaginary rank. Poverty, treading close upon her heels for a lifetime, has come up with her at last. She must earn her own food or starve. And we have stolen upon Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon too irreverently at the instant of time when the patrician lady is to be transformed into the plebeian woman.

“ In this republican country, amid the fluctuating waves of our social life, somebody is always at the drowning point. The tragedy is enacted with as continual a repetition as that of a popular drama on a holiday ; and, nevertheless, is felt as deeply perhaps as when an hereditary noble sinks below his order. More deeply ; since with us rank is the grosser substance of wealth and a splendid establishment, and has no spiritual existence after the death of these, but dies hopelessly along with them. And therefore since we have been so

unfortunate as to introduce our heroine at so inauspicious a juncture, we would entreat for a mood of due solemnity in the spectators of her fate. Let us behold in poor Hepzibah, the immemorial lady, two hundred years old, on this side of the water, and thrice as many on the other, with her antique portraits, pedigrees, coats of arms, and her claim as first heiress to that princely territory at the eastward, no longer a wilderness but a populous fertility—born too in Pyncheon Street, under the Pyncheon elm, and in the Pyncheon house where she has spent all her days, reduced now in that very house to be the huckstress of a cent shop.

“This business of setting up a petty shop is almost the only resource of woman in circumstances at all similar to those of our unfortunate recluse. With her near-sightedness and those tremulous fingers of hers, at once inflexible and delicate, she could not be a seamstress, although her sampler of fifty years gone-by exhibited some of the most recondite specimens of ornamental needle-work. A school for little children had been often in her thoughts, and, at one time, she had begun a review of her early studies in the New England Primer, with a view to prepare herself for the office of instructress. But the love of children had never been quickened in Hepzibah’s heart, and was now torpid if not extinct; she watched the little people of the neighbourhood from her chamber-window, and doubted whether she could tolerate a more intimate acquaintance with them. Besides, in our day the very A B C had become a science greatly too abstruse to be any longer taught by pointing a pen from letter to letter. A modern child could teach old Hepzibah more than old Hepzibah could teach the child. So with many a cold, deep heart-quake at the idea of at last coming into sordid contact with the world, from which she had so long kept aloof, while every added day of seclusion had rolled another stone against the cavern door of her hermitage, the poor thing bethought herself of the ancient shop-window, the rusty scales, and dusty till. She might have held back a little longer; but another circumstance not yet hinted at, had somewhat hastened her decision. Her humble preparations, therefore, were duly made, and the enterprise was now to be commenced. Nor was she entitled to complain of any remarkable singularity in her fate. For in the town of her

nativity we might point to several little shops of a similar description ; some of them in houses as ancient as that of the Seven Gables, and one or two it may be where a decayed gentlewoman stands behind the counter, as grim an image of family pride as Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon herself.

“ Our miserable old Hepzibah ! It is a heavy annoyance to a writer who endeavours to represent nature, its various attitudes and circumstances, in a reasonably correct outline and true colouring, that so much of the mean and ludicrous should be hopelessly mixed up with the purest pathos that life anywhere supplies to him. What tragic dignity, for example, can be wrought into a scene like this ? How can we elevate our history of retribution for sin of long ago, when, as one of our most prominent figures, we are compelled to introduce, not a young and lovely woman, nor even the stately remains of beauty storm-shattered by affliction, but a gaunt, sallow, rusty-jointed maiden, in a long-waisted silk gown, and with the strange horror of a turban on her head ? Nevertheless, if we look through all the heroic fortunes of mankind, we shall find the same entanglement of something mean or trivial with whatever is noblest in joy or sorrow. What is called poetic insight is the gift of discerning in this sphere of strangely-mingled elements, the beauty and the majesty which are compelled to assume a garb so sordid.”

It would be difficult to deny the gift of “ poetic insight ” to this mixture of admirable detail with something at once higher and deeper. Balzac, the great novelist of modern France, known only to those amongst us who thoroughly possess his language, for he is untranslated and untranslatable, has in certain romances of provincial life the same perfection of Dutch painting and of homely tragedy. But Mr. Hawthorne is free from Balzac’s scoff. The story of the first day behind the counter goes on with inimitable truth, minuteness and variety. The cracked bell tinkles, and the poor old lady totters nervously to her post. Her first customer is a friendly one ; a young artist—an artist after a somewhat American fashion, a Daguerreotypist—who inhabited one of the Seven Gables, and affords a capital specimen of the adventurous youth of the United States. Manly, comely, cheerful, kind, brimful of determined energy and common sense, he has already tried some half-score of careers—schoolmaster, editor,

agent, engineer—and is sure to conquer fortune at last. Their conversation lets us into much of the story, and shows besides that poor Hepzibah will not make her fortune by her shop, for he comes to purchase biscuits, and she begs to be for one moment a gentlewoman, and not be forced into accepting money from her only friend. Then comes an old, humble, sauntering neighbour, who again helps on the narrative ; then a greedy boy, who finding the cent which he offered for the gingerbread Jim Crow refused from pure disgust, returns in half an hour and eats the elephant. Then the rich Judge passes : and Hepzibah trembles as his shadow darkens the window—and then the common crew.

“Customers came in as the forenoon advanced, but rather slowly ; in some cases too, it must be owned, with little satisfaction either to themselves or Miss Hepzibah ; nor, on the whole, with an aggregate of very rich emolument to the till. A little girl, sent by her mother to match a skein of cotton thread of a peculiar hue, took one that the near-sighted old lady pronounced extremely like, but very soon came running back with a blunt and cross message that it would not do, and besides, was very rotten ! Then there was a pale, care-wrinkled woman, not old, but haggard, and already with streaks of grey among her hair, like silver ribbons ; one of those women naturally delicate, whom you at once recognise as worn to death by a brute, probably a drunken brute of a husband, and at least nine children. She wanted a few pounds of flour, and offered the money, which the decayed gentlewoman silently rejected, and gave the poor soul better measure than if she had taken it. Shortly afterwards, a man in a blue cotton frock, much soiled, came in and bought a pipe, filling the whole shop meanwhile with the hot odour of strong drink, not only exhaled in the torrid atmosphere of his breath, but oozing out of his whole system, like an inflammable gas. It was impressed on Hepzibah’s mind that this was the husband of the care-wrinkled woman. He asked for a paper of tobacco, and as she had neglected to provide herself with the article, her brutal customer dashed down his newly-purchased pipe, and left the shop, muttering some unintelligible words, which had the tone and bitterness of a curse. Hereupon Hepzibah threw up her eyes, unintentionally scowling in the face of Providence.

"No less than five persons during the forenoon inquired for ginger-beer or root-beer, or any drink of a similar beverage, and obtaining nothing of the kind, went off in exceedingly bad humour. Three of them left the door open ; but the other two pulled it so spitefully in going out, that it played the very deuce with Hepzibah's nerves. A round, bustling, fire-ruddy housewife of the neighbourhood burst breathless into the shop, fiercely demanding yeast ; and when the poor gentlewoman, with her cold shyness of manner, gave her customer to understand that she did not keep the article, this very capable housekeeper took upon herself to administer a regular rebuke :

" 'A cent shop and no yeast !' quoth she ; 'that will never do ! Who ever heard of such a thing ? Your loaf will never rise, no more than mine will to-day. You had better shut up shop at once.'

" 'Well,' said Hepzibah, heaving a deep sigh, 'perhaps I had.'

And so the day wears on. Some come obviously from curiosity, and the old lady loses her temper, and becomes more and more bewildered.

" Her final operation was with the little devourer of Jim Crow and the elephant, who now proposed to eat a camel. In her tribulation, she offered him first a wooden dragoon, and next a handful of marbles ; neither of which being adapted to his else omnivorous appetite, she hastily held out her whole remaining stock of natural history in gingerbread, and huddled the small customer out of the shop. She then muffled the bell in an unfinished stocking, and put up the oaken bar across the door.

" During the latter process, an omnibus came to a standstill under the branches of the elm-tree. A gentleman alighted ; but it was only to offer his hand to a young girl, whose slender figure nowise needing such assistance, now lightly descended the steps, and made an airy little jump from the final one to the side-walk. She rewarded her cavalier with a smile, the cheery glow of which was seen reflected on his own face as he re-entered the vehicle. The girl then turned towards the House of the Seven Gables ; to the door of which meanwhile—not the shop-door, but the antique portal—the omnibus man had carried a light trunk and a

bandbox. First giving a sharp rap of the old iron knocker, he left his passenger and her luggage at the door-step and departed.

“‘Who can it be?’ thought Hepzibah, who had been screwing her visual organs into the acutest focus of which they were capable. ‘The girl must have mistaken the house.’

“She stole softly into the hall, and, herself invisible, gazed through the side-lights of the portal at the young, blooming, and very cheerful face which presented itself for admittance into the gloomy old mansion. It was a face to which almost any door would have opened of its own accord.

“The young girl, so fresh, so unconventional, and yet so orderly and so obedient to common rules as you at once recognise her to be, was widely in contrast at that moment with everything around her. The sordid and ugly luxuriance of gigantic weeds that grew in the angle of the house, and the heavy projection that overshadowed her, and the time-worn framework of the door, none of these things belonged to her sphere. But even as a ray of sunshine, fall into what dismal place it may, instantaneously creates for itself a propriety in being there, so did it seem altogether fit that the girl should be standing at the threshold. It was no less evidently proper that the door should swing open to admit her. The maiden lady herself, sternly inhospitable in her first purposes, soon began to feel that the bolt ought to be shoved back, and the rusty key be turned in the reluctant lock.

“‘Can it be Phœbe?’ questioned she within herself. ‘It must be little Phœbe; for it can be nobody else; and there is a look of her father about her too! Well! she must have a night’s lodging, I suppose, and to-morrow the child shall go back to her mother.’

“Phœbe Pyncheon slept, on the night of her arrival, in a chamber that looked down on the garden of the old house. It fronted towards the east, so that at a very seasonable hour a glowing crimson light came flooding through the window and bathed the dingy ceiling and paper-hangings of its own hue. There were curtains to Phœbe’s bed; a dark antique canopy and ponderous festoons, of a stuff that had been magnificent in its time but which now brooded over the girl like

a cloud, making a night in that one corner, while elsewhere it was beginning to be day. The morning light, however, soon stole into the aperture at the foot of the bed betwixt those faded curtains. Finding the new guest there with a bloom on her cheeks like the morning's own, and a gentle stir of departing slumber in her limbs, as when an early breeze moves the foliage, the dawn kissed her brow. It was the caress which a dewy maiden—such as the dawn is immortally—gives to her sleeping sister, partly from the impulse of irresistible fondness, and partly as a pretty hint that it is time now to unclose her eyes.

"At the touch of those lips of light, Phœbe quietly awoke, and for a moment did not recognise where she was, nor how those heavy curtains chanced to be festooned around her. Nothing indeed was absolutely plain to her, except that it was now early morning, and that, whatever might happen next, it was proper first of all to get up and say her prayers. She was the more inclined to devotion from the grim aspect of the chamber and its furniture, especially the tall stiff chairs ; one of which stood close to her bedside, and looked as if some old-fashioned personage had been sitting there all night, and had vanished only just in season to escape discovery.

"When Phœbe was quite dressed, she peeped out of the window, and saw a rose-bush in the garden. Being a very tall one, and of luxuriant growth, it had been propped up against the side of the house, and was literally covered with a rare and very beautiful species of white rose. A large portion of them, as the girl afterwards discovered, had blight or mildew at their hearts ; but viewed at a fair distance, the whole rose-bush looked as if it had been brought from Eden that very summer, together with the mould in which it grew. The truth was, nevertheless, that it had been planted by Alice Pyncheon—she was Phœbe's great-great-grand-aunt—in soil which, reckoning only its cultivation as a garden-plat, was now unctuous with nearly two hundred years of vegetable decay. Growing as they did, however, out of the old earth, the flowers still sent a fresh and sweet incense up to their Creator ; nor could it have been the less pure and acceptable because Phœbe's young breath mingled with it, as the fragrance floated past the window. Hastening down the creaking and

carpetless staircase, she found her way into the garden, gathered some of the most perfect of the roses, and brought them to her chamber.

“Little Phœbe was one of those persons who possess, as their exclusive patrimony, the gift of practical arrangement. It is a kind of natural magic that enables these favoured ones to bring out the hidden capabilities of things around them ; and particularly to give a look of comfort and habitableness to any place which, for however brief a period, may happen to be their home. A wild hut of underbrush, tossed together by wayfarers through the primitive forest, would acquire the home aspect by one night’s lodging of such a woman, and would retain it long after her quiet figure had disappeared into the surrounding shade. No less a portion of such homely witchcraft was requisite to reclaim, as it were, Phœbe’s waste, cheerless, dusky chamber, which had been untenanted so long, except by spiders, and mice, and rats, and ghosts, that it was all overgrown with the desolation which watches to obliterate every trace of men’s happier homes. What was precisely Phœbe’s process we find it impossible to say. She appeared to have no preliminary design, but gave a touch here and another there ; brought some articles of furniture to light, and dragged others into the shadow ; looped up or let down a window-curtain ; and in the course of half an hour had fully succeeded in throwing a kind and hospitable smile over the apartment.

“There was still another peculiarity of this inscrutable charm. The bedchamber, no doubt, was a chamber of very great and varied experience as a scene of human life. Here had come the bridegroom with his bride ; new immortals had here drawn their earliest breath ; and here the old had died. But whether it were the white roses, or whatever the subtle influence might be, a person of delicate instinct would have known at once that it was now a maiden’s bedchamber, and had been purified of all former evil and sorrow by her sweet breath and happy thoughts.”

There is a touch of Göthe’s Margaret, the Margaret of “Faust,” in the last paragraph. But Phœbe is a truly original conception. To quote her thousand prettinesses of thought and action, would be to copy half the volume. Suffice it that she stays with her good old cross cousin ; and that, under her

auspices, the shop flourishes, and the tottering mansion loses half its gloom.

P.S.—I have just received an American reprint of Mr. Hawthorne's earliest volumes, "Twice Told Tales," two or three of which are as fine as his larger efforts—one especially, in which a story is told by a succession of unspoken sounds as clearly as it could have been by pictures. It is one of Messrs. Ticknor, Reed, and Field's beautiful editions, and the preface and portrait are most interesting. Nothing can exceed the modesty of that preface, and I am told that Mr. Hawthorne is astonished at his own reputation, and thinks himself the most over-rated man in America. Then that portrait—what a head! and he is said to be of the height and build of Daniel Webster. So much the better. It is well that a fine intellect should be fitly lodged; such harmony is amongst the best and rarest of natural gifts.

Mr. Hawthorne is engaged in another tale, and on a work for young people, which, from such a man, will probably prove quite as acceptable to children of a larger growth as to those for whom it is ostensibly written.

XL

OLD POETS.

ANDREW MARVELL.

ANDREW MARVELL'S very name suggests the idea of incorruptible patriotism. The well-known story of his refusing a court bribe, by calling his servant to prove that he had dined three times upon a shoulder of mutton, although probably apocryphal, serves to prove the notion universally entertained of the uncompromising member for Hull,—unassailable as Robespierre himself to all money temptations, and strong enough to have resisted the subtler temptations of power. His learning, too, is generally acknowledged. He shared with Milton the high and honourable office of Latin Secretary to the Lord Protector,—was the champion of the great poet's living reputation, the supporter of free principles against all assailants, and is praised even by Swift, not addicted to over-praise, for the keen wit and fiery eloquence of his polemical

tracts ; nay, the Dean paid him the still more unequivocal compliment of imitating his style pretty closely.

As a poet he is little known, except to the professed and unwearyed reader of old folios. And yet his poems possess many of the finest elements of popularity—a rich profusion of fancy, which almost dazzles the mind as bright colours dazzle the eye—an earnestness and heartiness which do not always, do not often, belong to these flowery fancies, but which, when found in their company, add to them inexpressible vitality and savour—and a frequent felicity of phrase, which, when once read, fixes itself in the memory, and *will* not be forgotten.

Mixed with these dazzling qualities is much carelessness and a prodigality of conceits which the stern Roundhead ought to have left, with other frippery, to his old enemies, the Cavaliers. But it was the vice of the age—all ages have their favourite literary sins—and we must not blame Marvell too severely for falling into an error to which the very exuberance of his nature rendered him peculiarly prone. His mind was a bright garden, such a garden as he has described so finely ; and that a few gaudy weeds should mingle with the healthier plants, does but serve to prove the fertility of the soil.

BERMUDAS.

Where the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied ;
From a small boat that rowed along
The listening winds received their song.

“ What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own ?

“ Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks
That lift the deep upon their backs,
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms and prelate's rage.

“ He gave us this eternal spring,
Which here enamels everything ;
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air.

“ He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows.

“ He makes the figs our mouths to meet ;
 And throws the melons at our feet ;
 But apples, plants of such a price,
 No tree could ever bear them twice.

“ With cedars, chosen by His Hand,
 From Lebanon He stores the land ;
 And makes the hollow seas that roar
 Proclaim the ambergris on shore.

“ He casts, of which we rather boast,
 The Gospel’s pearl upon our coast ;
 And in these rocks for us did frame
 A Temple where to sound His name.

“ Oh let our voice His praise exalt
 Till it shall reach to Heaven’s vault,
 Which thence, perhaps, rebounding may
 Echo beyond the Mexique bay ! ”

Thus sang they in the English boat,
 A holy and a cheerful note ;
 And all the way, to guide their chime,
 With falling oars they kept the time.

THE GARDEN.

How vainly men themselves amaze
 To win the palm, the oak, or bays ;
 And their incessant labours see
 Crowned from some single herb or tree,
 Whose short and narrow vergèd shade
 Does prudently their toils upbraid ;
 While all the flowers and trees do close,
 To weave the garland of repose.

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
 And Innocence, thy sister dear ?
 Mistaken long, I sought you then
 In busy companies of men.
 Your sacred plants, if here below,
 Only among the plants will grow.
 Society is all but rude
 To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
 So amorous as this lovely green.
 Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
 Cut in these trees their mistress’ name.
 Little, alas ! they know or heed
 How far these beauties her exceed !
 Fair trees ! where’er your backs I wound,
 No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion’s heat,
 Love hither makes his best retreat.

The gods, who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race.
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow ;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a seed.

What wondrous life in this I lead !
Ripe apples drop about my head ;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine ;
The nectarine, the curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach ;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness ;
The mind, that ocean, where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find,
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas ;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide :
There like a bird it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings ;
And till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walked without a mate ;
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet !
But 't was beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there ;
Two Paradises are in one,
To live in Paradise alone !

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new :
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant Zodiac run :
And as it works, the industrious bee
Computes his time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers ?

Wicked person ! I was over-charitable in forgiving his conceits. It is not in woman to pardon his want of gallantry. One can only suppose that the unhappy man was an old

bachelor. If the last stanza but one be provoking to female vanity, the last of all excites another feminine quality, called curiosity. What does the new dial mean? Is there really nothing new under the sun? And had they in the middle of the seventeenth century discovered the horologe of Flora?

THE NYMPH COMPLAINING FOR THE DEATH OF HER FAWN.

The wanton troopers riding by
 Have shot my fawn, and it will die.
 Ungentle men! they cannot thrive
 Who killed thee. Thou ne'er didst alive
 Them any harm. Alas! nor could
 Thy death to them do any good.
 I'm sure I never wished them ill;
 Nor do I for all this; nor will:
 But if my simple prayers may yet
 Prevail with Heaven to forget
 Thy murder, I will join my tears
 Rather than fail. But oh, my fears!
 It cannot die so. Heaven's King
 Keeps register of everything,
 And nothing may we use in vain:
 Even beasts must be with justice slain.

* * * *

Inconstant Silvio, when yet
 I had not found him counterfeit,
 One morning (I remember well),
 Tied in this silver chain and bell,
 Gave it to me: nay, and I know
 What he said then: I'm sure I do.
 Said he, "Look how your huntsman here
 Hath taught a fawn to hunt his deer."
 But Silvio soon hath me beguiled.
 This waxèd tame, while he grew wild,
 And, quite regardless of my smart,
 Left me his fawn, but took his heart.
 Thenceforth I set myself to play
 My solitary time away
 With this, and very well content
 Could so my idle life have spent:
 For it was full of sport, and light
 Of foot and heart; and did invite
 Me to its game; it seemed to bless
 Itself in me. How could I less
 Than love it? Oh! I cannot be
 Unkind to a beast that loveth me.
 Had it lived long, I do not know
 Whether it too might have done so
 As Silvio did; his gifts might be
 Perhaps as false or more than he.

But I am sure, for aught that I
 Could in so short a time espy,
 Thy love was far more better than
 The love of false and cruel man.
 With sweetest milk and sugar, first
 I it at my own fingers nurst ;
 And, as it grew, so every day
 It waxed more sweet and white than they :
 It had so sweet a breath. And oft
 I blushed to see its foot more soft
 And white, shall I say than my hand ?
 Nay, any lady's of the land.
 It is a wondrous thing how fleet
 'T was on those little silver feet ;
 With what a pretty skipping grace
 It oft would challenge me the race ;
 And, when 't had left me far away,
 'Twould stay, and run again, and stay ;
 For it was nimbler much than hinds,
 And trod as if on the four winds.

I have a garden of my own,
 But so with roses overgrown
 And lilies, that you would it guess
 To be a little wilderness,
 And all the spring-time of the year
 It only lovèd to be there.
 Among the beds of lilies I
 Have sought it oft where it should lie,
 Yet could not, till itself would rise,
 Find it, although before mine eyes ;
 For in the flaxen lilies' shade
 It like a bank of lilies laid ;
 Upon the roses it would feed,
 Until its lips even seemed to bleed ;
 And then to me 't would boldly*trip,
 And print those roses on my lip.
 But all its chief delight was still
 On roses thus itself to fill,
 And its pure virgin limbs to fold
 In whitest sheets of lilies cold.
 Had it lived long, it would have been
 Lilies without, roses within.

* * * *

Nothing can exceed the tender grace, the delicate prettiness of this little poem. There is a trippingness in the measure, now stopping short, now bounding on, which could not have been exceeded by the playful motions of the poor fawn itself. We must forgive his want of gallantry ; it must have been all pretence. No true woman-hater could so have embodied a

feeling peculiar to the sex, the innocent love of a young girl for her innocent pet.

I must find room for a few stanzas of Marvell's Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's return from Ireland. Fine as the praise of Cromwell is, it yields in grandeur and beauty to the tribute paid by the Roundhead poet to the demeanour of the King upon the scaffold, by far the noblest of the many panegyrics upon the martyred King.

* * * *

Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armour's rust ;
Removing from the wall
The corselet o' the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urgèd his active star :

* * * *

And if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due,

Who from his private gardens, where
He lived reservèd and austere,
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot),

Could by industrious valour climb
To win the greatest work of Time,
And cast the kingdoms old
Into another mould !

Though justice against fate complain
And plead the ancient rights in vain,
But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak.

Nature that hateth emptiness
Allows of penetration less.
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the civil war
Where his were not the deepest scar ?
And Hampden shows what part
He had of wiser art :

Where, twining civil fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope,
That Charles himself might chase
To Carisbrooke's narrow case ;

That thence the royal actor borne
 The tragic scaffold might adorn.
 While round the arm'd bands
 Did clap their bloody hands,
He nothing common did or mean
 Upon that memorable scene,
 But with his keener eye
 The axe's edge did try :
 Nor called the gods, with vulgar spite,
 To vindicate his helpless right ;
 But bowed his comely head
 Down, as upon a bed.

And he who wrote this was Cromwell's Latin Secretary !—
 and Cromwell's other Latin Secretary was Milton ! There
 have been many praises of the Lord Protector written latterly,
 but these two facts seem to me worth them all.

XLI.

SCOTTISH POETS.

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

Two of the ballads of William Motherwell are amongst the most beautiful in the Scottish dialect, so full of lyrical beauty ; and yet the one that is the most touching is scarcely known, except to a few lovers of poetry. “Jeanie Morrison,” indeed, has an extensive popularity in Scotland ; and yet even that charming song is comparatively little known in this country.

Burns is the only poet with whom, for tenderness and pathos, Motherwell can be compared. The elder bard has written much more largely, is more various, more fiery, more abundant ; but I doubt if there be in the whole of his collection anything so exquisitely finished, so free from a line too many, or a word out of place, as the two great ballads of Motherwell. And let young writers observe that this finish was the result, not of a curious felicity, but of the nicest elaboration. By touching and retouching, during many years, did “Jeanie Morrison” attain her perfection ; and yet how completely has art concealed art ! How entirely does that charming song appear like an irrepressible gush of feeling that *would* find vent ! In “My heid is like to rend, Willie,” the

appearance of spontaneity is still more striking, as the passion is more intense—intense, indeed, almost to painfulness.

Like Burns, Motherwell died before he attained his fortieth year ; and like him, too, although a partisan of far different opinions, he was ardently engaged in political discussion as the editor of a Tory newspaper, in Glasgow. He was even the secretary of an institution that sounds strangely in English ears—a Scotch Orange Lodge. I notice these facts, only to observe that they are already almost forgotten. The elements of bitterness and hatred, in which the politician revels, live through their little day, then pass away for ever ; while the deep and pure feelings of a true poet are imperishable.

As with “Percy’s Reliques,” my own copy of Motherwell has to me an interest besides that of its high literary merits. If I would explain the source of that interest, I must even tell the story, luckily a very short one.

Three years ago, a friend, to whom I owe a thousand obligations of all sorts and kinds, posted London over to procure this volume. Now, my friend is a man of book-shops and book-stalls, but only one copy could he meet with, and that was neither Scotch nor English, but American, from the great Boston publishers, Ticknor and Company. The book became immediately a favourite, and was laid on the table—a phrase which in my little drawing-room has a very different sense from that which it bears in the House of Commons.

One fine summer afternoon, shortly after I had made this acquisition, two young Americans made their appearance, with letters of introduction from some honoured friends. There was no mention of profession or calling, but I soon found that they were not only men of intelligence and education, but of literary taste and knowledge ; one especially had the look, the air, the conversation of a poet. We talked on many subjects, and got at last to the delicate question of American reprints of English authors ; on which, much to their delight and a little to their surprise, there was no disagreement ; I for my poor part pleading guilty to the taking pleasure in such a diffusion of my humble works. “Besides,” continued I, “you send us better things—things otherwise unattainable. I could only procure the fine poems of Motherwell in this Boston edition.” My two visitors smiled at each other. “This is a most singular coincidence,” cried the one

whom I knew by instinct to be a poet. "I am a younger partner in this Boston house, and at my pressing instance this book was reprinted. I cannot tell you how pleased I am to see it here!"

Mr. Field's visit was necessarily brief; but that short interview has laid the foundation of a friendship which will, I think, last as long as my frail life, and of which the benefit is all on my side. He sends me charming letters, verses which are fast ripening into true poetry, excellent books; and this autumn he brought back himself, and came to pay me a second visit; and he must come again, for of all the kindnesses with which he loads me, I like his company best.

My heid is like to rend, Willie,
 My heart is like to break,—
 I 'm wearin' aff my feet, Willie,
 I 'm dying for your sake!
 O lay your cheek to mine, Willie,
 Your hand on my briest-bane,—
 O say ye'll think on me, Willie,
 When I am deid and gane!

It 's vain to comfort me, Willie,
 Sair grief maun ha'e its will,—
 But let me rest upon your briest,
 To sab and greet my fill.
 Let me sit on your knee, Willie,
 Let me shed by your hair,
 And look into the face, Willie,
 I never sall see mair!

I'm sittin' on your knee, Willie,
 For the last time in my life,—
 A puir heart-broken thing, Willie,
 A mither, yet nae wife.
 Ay, press your hand upon my heart,
 And press it mair and mair,—
 Or it will burst the silken twine,
 Sae strong is its despair!

Oh wae's me for the hour, Willie,
 When we thegither met,—
 Oh wae's me for the time, Willie,
 That our first tryst was set!
 Oh wae's me for the loanin' green
 Where we were wont to gae,—
 And wae's me for the destinie
 That gart me luve thee sac!

Oh ! dinna mind my words, Willie,
 I downa seek to blame,—
 But oh ! it's hard to live, Willie,
 And dree a warld's shame !
 Het tears are hailin' o'er your cheek
 And hailin' o'er your chin ;
 Why weep ye sae for worthlessness,
 For sorrow and for sin ?

I 'm weary of this warld, Willie,
 And sick wi' a' I see,—
 I canna live as I hae lived,
 Or be as I should be.
 But fauld unto your heart, Willie,
 The heart that still is thine,—
 And kiss ance mair the white white cheek
 Ye said was red lang syne.

A stoun' gae through my heid, Willie,
 A sair stoun' through my heart,—
 Oh ! haud me up and let me kiss
 Thy brow ere we twa pairt.
 Anither, and anither yet,
 How fast my heart-strings break !—
 Fareweel ! fareweel ! through yon kirkyard
 Step lightly for my sake !

The laverock in the lift, Willie,
 That lilts far ower our heid,
 Will sing the morn as merrilie
 Abune the clay-cauld deid ;
 And this green turf we're sittin' on
 Wi' dew-draps shimmerin' sheen,
 Will hap the heart that luvit thee
 As warld has seldom seen.

But oh ! remember me, Willie,
 On land where'er ye be,—
 And oh ! think on the leal, leal heart,
 That ne'er luvit ane but thee !
 And oh ! think on the cauld, cauld mools,
 That file my yellow hair,—
 That kiss the cheek, and kiss the chin
 Ye never sall kiss mair !

The following Cavalier Song was first given by Motherwell as an original manuscript by Lovelace, accidentally discovered on a fly-leaf of his poems. The story found believers. They ought to have seen that the imitation, though very skilful, was too close. Lovelace was the last man in the world to have repeated his own turns of phrase.

A steede ! a steede of matchless speed,
 A sword of metal keene !
 All else to noble heartes is drosse,
 All else on earth is meane.
 The neighynges of the war-horse prowde,
 The rowlinge of the drum,
 The clangor of the trumpet lowde,
 Be soundes from heaven that come.
 And oh ! the thundering presse of knightes
 When as their war-cryes swell,
 May toll from heaven an angel brighte,
 And rouse a fiend from hell.

Then mounte ! then mounte, brave gallants, all,
 And don your helmes amaine,
 Death's couriers, Fame and Honour, call
 Us to the field againe.
 No shrewish teares shall fill our eye—
 When the sword-hilt's in our hand—
 Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
 For the fayrest of the land ;
 Let piping swaine and craven wight
 Thus weep and puling crye,
 Our business is like men to fight,
 And hero-like to die !

JEANIE MORRISON.

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
 Through mony a weary way ;
 But never, never can forget
 The luve o' life's young day !
 The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en
 May weel be black gin Yule ;
 But blacker fa' awaits the heart
 Where first fond love grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 The thoochts o' bygane years
 Still fling their shadows ow'r my path
 And blind my een wi' tears :
 They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
 And sair and sick I pine,
 As memory idly summons up
 The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
 'Twas then we twa did part ;
 Sweet time ! sad time ! twa bairns at schule,
 Twa bairns and but ae heart !
 'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
 To leir ilk ither lear ;
 And tones and looks and smiles were shed,
 Remembered ever mair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
 When sitting on that bink,
 Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
 What our wee heads could think ?
 When baith bent doun ower ae braid page
 Wi' ae buik on our knee,
 Thy lids were on thy lesson, but
 My lesson was in thee.

Oh mind ye how we hung our heads,
 How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
 Whene'er the schule-weans laughin' said
 We cleeked thegither hame ?
 And mind ye o' the Saturdays
 (The scule then skail't at noon),
 When we ran aff to speel the braes,
 The broomy braes o' June ?

My head rins round and round about,
 My heart flows like a sea,
 As ane by ane the thochts rush back
 O' scule-time and o' thee.
 O mornin' life ! O mornin' luve !
 O lichtsome days and lang,
 When hinnied hopes around our hearts
 Like simmer blossoms sprang.

Oh, mind ye, luve, how oft we left
 The deavin' dinsome toun,
 To wander by the green burnside,
 And hear its waters croon ?
 The simmer leaves hung ower our heads,
 The flowers burst round our feet,
 And in the gloamin' o' the wood
 The throssil whusslit sweet.

The throssil whusslit in the wood,
 The burn sang to the trees,
 And we with Nature's heart in tune
 Concerted harmonies ;
 And, on the knowe abune the burn,
 For hours thegither sat
 I' the silentness o' joy, till baith
 Wi' very gladness grat.

Ay, ay, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 Tears trinkled doun your cheek,
 Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
 Had ony power to speak !
 That was a time, a blessed time,
 When hearts were fresh and young,
 When freely gushed all feelings forth
 Unsyllabled, unsung !

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
 Gin I hae been to thee
 As closely twined wi' earliest thochts
 As ye hae been to me?
 Oh! tell me gin their music fills
 Thine ear as it does mine?
 Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows grit
 Wi' dreamings o' lang syne?
 I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
 I've borne a weary lot;
 But in my wanderings, far or near,
 Ye never were forgot.
 That fount that first burst frae this heart
 Still travels on its way;
 And channels deeper as it rins,
 The luve o' life's young day.
 Oh, dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 Since we were sindered young,
 I've never seen your face, nor heard
 The music o' your tongue;
 But I could hug all wretchedness,
 And happy could I die,
 Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
 O' bygone days and me!

XLII.

GREAT PROSE WRITERS.

LORD BACON—JOHN MILTON—JEREMY TAYLOR—JOHN RUSKIN—
 CONCLUSION.

OF the many illustrious prose writers who adorned the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, Bacon is the one whose shrewdness, and power, and admirable good sense have left the deepest traces in our literature. His essays are still read with avidity and delight, every fresh perusal bringing forth fresh proofs of his knowledge of human nature and felicity of language. We cannot but be grateful to the author, however we may dislike as a man the treacherous friend of Essex and the cringing parasite of James.

I do not know any single passage that more advantageously displays his fulness and richness of thought and of style than this on the use of study.

“Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability.

Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring ; for ornament is in discourse ; and for ability is in the judgment and disposition of business ; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars one by one ; but the general counsels, and the plots, and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth ; to use them too much for ornament is affectation ; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience ; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study ; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them ; for they teach not their own use ; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read, not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested : that is, some books are to be read only in parts ; others to be read, but not curiously ; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others ; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books ; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man ; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory ; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit ; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not.”

I add one very fine illustration :

“ If the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and associateth the most remote regions in participation of their fruits, how much more are letters to be magnified, which as ships pass through the vast sea of Time, and make ages so distant participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, the one of the other ! ”

In John Milton’s grand and holy fame there is no alloy. The man was as great and pure as the author. I am not sure

whether (always excepting the minor poems) I do not prefer the stately and weighty march of his prose, even to his lofty and resounding verse. I select some noble passages from his "Appeal for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing."

"I do not deny but it is of the greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men ; and therefore to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors ; for books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them, to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are ; nay, they do preserve, as in a phial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that which bred them. I know they are as lively, as vigorously productive as those fabulous dragons' teeth ; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men ; and yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book : who kills a man, kills a reasonable creature, God's image : but he who kills a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth ; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss ; and revolutions of ages do not often recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labours of public men ; how spill that treasured life of man preserved and stored up in books, since we see what a homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a kind of martyrdom ; and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying an elemental life, but strikes at that ethereal and soft essence, the breath of reason itself, slays an immortality rather than a life.

* * * * *

"Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably ; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche as an incessant labour to cull out and sort asunder, were not more

intermixed. It was from out the rind of one apple tasted that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is that doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil, that is to say, of knowing good by evil. As, therefore, the state of man now is, what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear, without the knowledge of evil ? He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather. That which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue, therefore, which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a grace ; which was the reason why our sage and serious poet Spenser (whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas), describing true temperance under the person of Guion, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon and the bower of earthly bliss that he might see and know, and yet abstain.

* * * * *

“ If, therefore, ye be loth to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew and false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study, and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labours advance the good of mankind ; then know that so far to disturb the judgment and honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him. What

advantage is it to be a man over a boy at school if we have only escaped the ferula to come under the fescue of an imprimator ?—if serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporising and extemporising licenser ? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evil, and standing to the hazard of the law and penalty, has no great reason to think himself reputed in the Commonwealth wherein he was born for other than a fool or a foreigner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him ; he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends ; after all which is done, he takes himself to be informed in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him ; if in this, the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no industry, no former proof of his ability can bring him to that state of maturity as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his considerate diligence, all his midnight watchings, to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps much his inferior in judgment, and perhaps one who never knew the labour of book-writing.”

* * * * *

“ And lest some should persuade ye, Lords and Commons, that these arguments of learned men’s discouragement at this your order, are mere flourishes, and not real, I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannises ; when I have sat amongst their learned men (for that honour I had) and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought ; that this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits ; that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fashion. There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican masters thought. And though I knew that England was then groaning loudest under the prelatrical yoke, nevertheless, I took it

as a pledge of future happiness that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty."

* * * * *

"Lords and Commons of England! consider what nation it is whereof ye are the governors; a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point that human capacity can soar to. * * * Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle, showing her mighty youth and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unsealing her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole voice of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means.

* * * * *

"Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injudiciously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the best and purest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clear knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of Geneva, framed and fabricated already to our hands. Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this! whereas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, 'to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures,' early and late, that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute! When a man hath been labouring the hardest labour in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun if he please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument; for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valour enough in soldier-

ship, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth. For who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty ? She needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious ; those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power. Give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps."

Jeremy Taylor, the great ornament of English pulpit eloquence, is the fit successor of John Milton ; yet no two writers, each being so admirable, can be more different. The prelate, with his inimitable grace, his fertility, and his fancy ; the poet, with his fulness, his grandeur, and his force. They who would enjoy the pleasure of seeing the life and works of Bishop Taylor related and analysed by a kindred mind, should read the charming work of my friend, Mr. Willmott. I content myself with extracting one splendid passage from his sermon on the Marriage Ring.

" Marriage is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents and the charity of relations ; here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre. Marriage is the nursery of heaven. The virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to Him ; but the state of marriage fills up the number of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts. It hath in it less of beauty but more of safety than the single life ; it hath more ease but less danger ; it is more merry and more sad ; is fuller of sorrows and fuller of joys ; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful.

" Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities and churches, and heaven itself. Celibate, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual singularity ; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house, and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys their King, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world."

Mr. Ruskin's name is not unworthy of being included in

this illustrious catalogue. Nothing in modern literature was more remarkable than the appearance of the young Oxford graduate in the great field of art, attacking with fearless boldness all that had been consecrated by the veneration of ages ; demolishing old idols, setting up new ; often no doubt right, sometimes probably wrong ; but always striking, always eloquent, always true to his own convictions and his own noble nature. I am too ignorant of his great subject to venture any opinion upon particular decisions ; but it is certain that nothing but good can result from drawing, as he has done, the attention of the English public to the merits of their living countrymen, and sending the patrons of Art from the picture-dealer to the painter : nothing but good either to the taste or the heart from his own written pictures, holy and pure, and bright, as those of his favourite Wordsworth. Many passages of "The Modern Painters" are really poems in their tenderness, their sentiment, and their grandeur. Who except a poet could put, as he has done, life into a flower, in his exquisite description of the Soldanella of the Alps, a coarse and common plant, when seen in luxuriant health in a fertile valley, but rising into a touching, almost an ideal grace, when languishing through a faint and feeble existence, on the extreme borders of those eternal snows, where it shows, like a memory of beauty, a consolation and a hope amidst the horrors and desolation of a stern and barren world.

But the greatest triumph of Mr. Ruskin is that long series of cloud pictures, unparalleled, I suppose, in any language, whether painted or written. I transcribe the fine opening of these magnificent chapters :

OF THE OPEN SKY.

" It is a strange thing how little, in general, people know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which Nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him, and teaching him, than in any other of her works ; and it is just the part in which we least attend to her. There are not many of her other works in which some more material or essential purpose than the mere pleasing of man is not answered by every part of their organization ; but every essential purpose of the sky might, so far as we know, be answered if, once in three days or there-

abouts, a great ugly black rain-cloud were brought up over the blue, and everything well watered, and so all left blue again till next time, with, perhaps, a film of morning and evening mist for dew. And, instead of this, there is not a moment of any day of our lives when Nature is not producing scene after scene, picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles of the most perfect beauty, that it is quite certain that it is all done for us, and intended for our perpetual pleasure. And every man, wherever placed, however far from other sources of interest or of beauty, has this doing for him constantly. The noblest scenes of the earth can be seen and known but by few ; it is not intended that man should live always in the midst of them : he injures them by his presence ; he ceases to feel them if he be always with them : but the sky is for all ; bright as it is, it is not 'too bright nor good for human nature's daily food ;' it is fitted in all its functions for the perpetual comfort and exalting of the heart, for the soothing it, and purifying it from its dross and dust. Sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful—never the same for two moments together ; almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity, its appeal to what is immortal in us is as distinct as its ministry of chastisement or of blessing to what is mortal, is essential. And yet we never attend to it, we never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations ; we look upon all by which it speaks to us more clearly than to brutes, upon all which bears witness to the intention of the Supreme, that we are to receive more from the covering vault than the light and the dew which we share with the weed and the worm, only as a succession of meaningless and monotonous accident, too common and too vain to be worthy of a moment of watchfulness, or a glance of admiration. If, in our moments of utter idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of ? One says it has been wet, and another it has been windy, and another it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that gilded the horizon at noon yesterday ? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits, until they

melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain ? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds, when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it, like withered leaves ? All has passed unregretted or unseen ; or, if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or what is extraordinary ; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice. They are but the blunt and the low faculties of our nature, which can only be addressed through lampblack and lightning. It is in quiet and subdued passages of unobtrusive majesty, the deep, and the calm, and the perpetual—that which must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood—things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally, which are never wanting, and never repeated, which are to be found always, yet each found but once. It is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given."

Jeremy Taylor himself has nothing more holy or more beautiful than this passage.

My most kind friend, Mr. Ruskin, will understand why I connect his name with the latest event that has befallen me, the leaving the cottage that for thirty years had been my shelter. In truth, it was leaving me. All above the foundation seemed mouldering, like an old cheese, with damp and rottenness. The rain came dripping through the roof and steaming through the walls. The hailstones pattered upon my bed through the casements, and the small panes rattled and fell to pieces every high wind. My pony was driven from his stable by a great hole where the bricks had fallen out of the side, and from the coach-house, where he was placed for refuge, by a huge gap in the thatch above. There was some danger that his straw bed must be spread in the little hall ; but the hall itself was no safer, for one evening, crossing from the door to the staircase, I found myself dragging off the skirting-board by no stronger impulsion than the flounce of a muslin gown. The poor cottage was crumbling around us, and if we had stayed much longer we should have been buried in the ruins.

And yet it was great grief to go. Besides my hatred of all change, especially change of place, a tendency to take root where I am planted, and to eschew all fresh dwellings, which renders me quite an anachronism in this locomotive age,—besides my general aversion to new habitations, I had associations with those old walls which endeared them to me more than I can tell. There I had toiled and striven, and tasted as deeply of bitter anxiety, of fear, and of hope, as often falls to the lot of woman. There, in the fulness of age, I had lost those whose love had made my home sweet and precious. Alas! there is no hearth so humble but it has known such tales of joy and of sorrow!

Other recollections, less dear and less sad, added their interest to the place. Friends, many and kind,—strangers, whose mere names were an honour, had come to that bright garden, and that garden room. The list would fill more pages than I have to give. There Mr. Justice Talfourd had brought the delightful gaiety of his brilliant youth, and poor Haydon had talked more vivid pictures than he ever painted. The illustrations of the last century—Mrs. Opie, Miss Porter, Mr. Cary—had mingled there with poets, still in their earliest dawn. It was a heart-tug to leave that garden.

But necessity (may I not rather say Providence?) works for us better than our own vain wishes. I did move—I was compelled to move from the dear old house; not very far; not much farther than Cowper when he migrated from Olney to Weston, and with quite as happy an effect. I walked from the one cottage to the other on an autumn evening, when the vagrant birds, whose habit of assembling here for their annual departure gives, I suppose, its name of Swallowfield to the village, were circling and twittering over my head; and repeated to myself the pathetic lines of Hayley as he saw those same birds gathering upon his roof during his last illness:

“ Ye gentle birds, that perch aloof,
And smooth your pinions on my roof,
Preparing for departure hence
Ere winter’s angry threats commence;
Like you my soul would smooth her plume
For longer flights beyond the tomb.

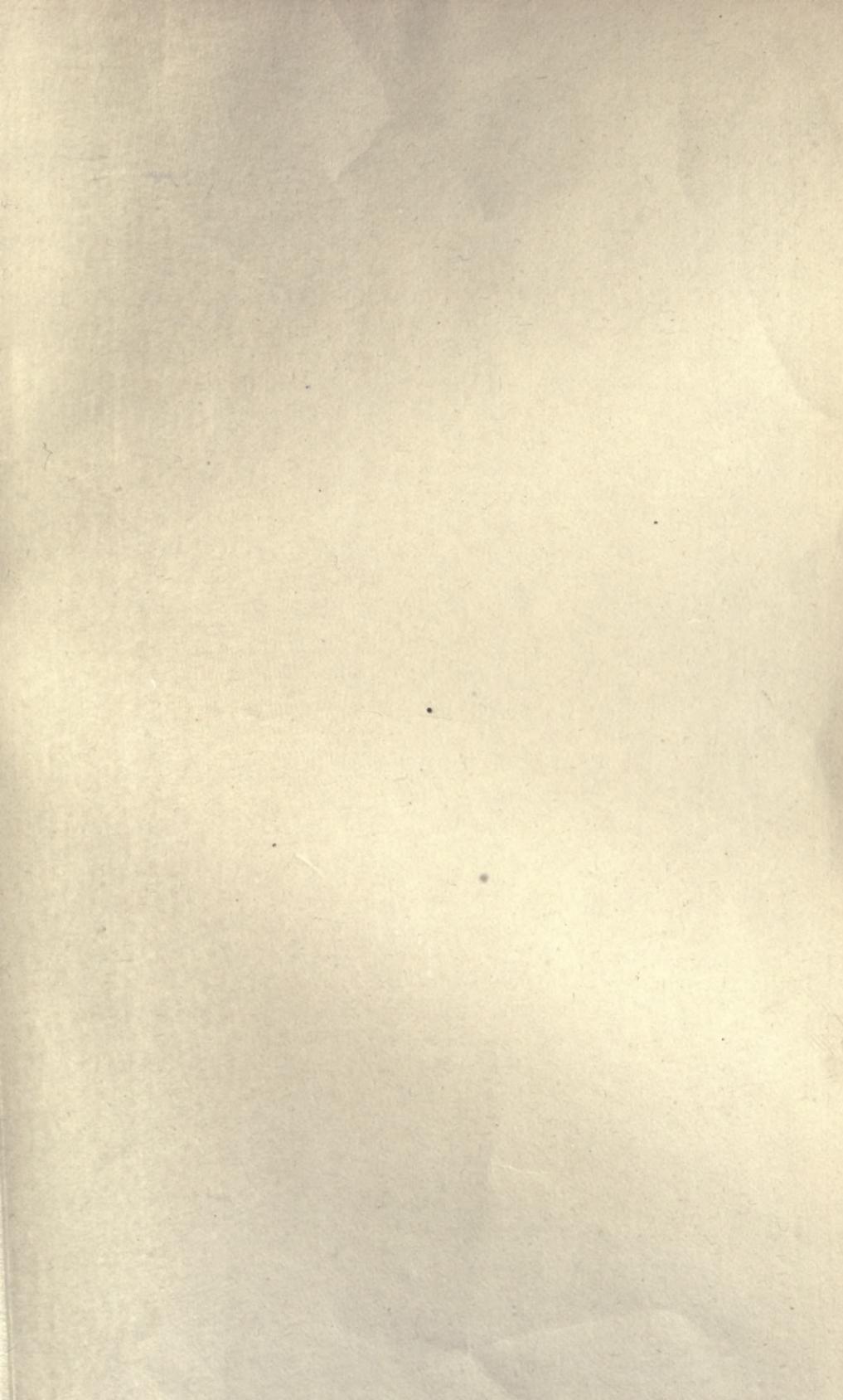
“May God, by whom is seen and heard
Departing man and wandering bird,
In mercy mark us for His own
And guide us to the land unknown !”

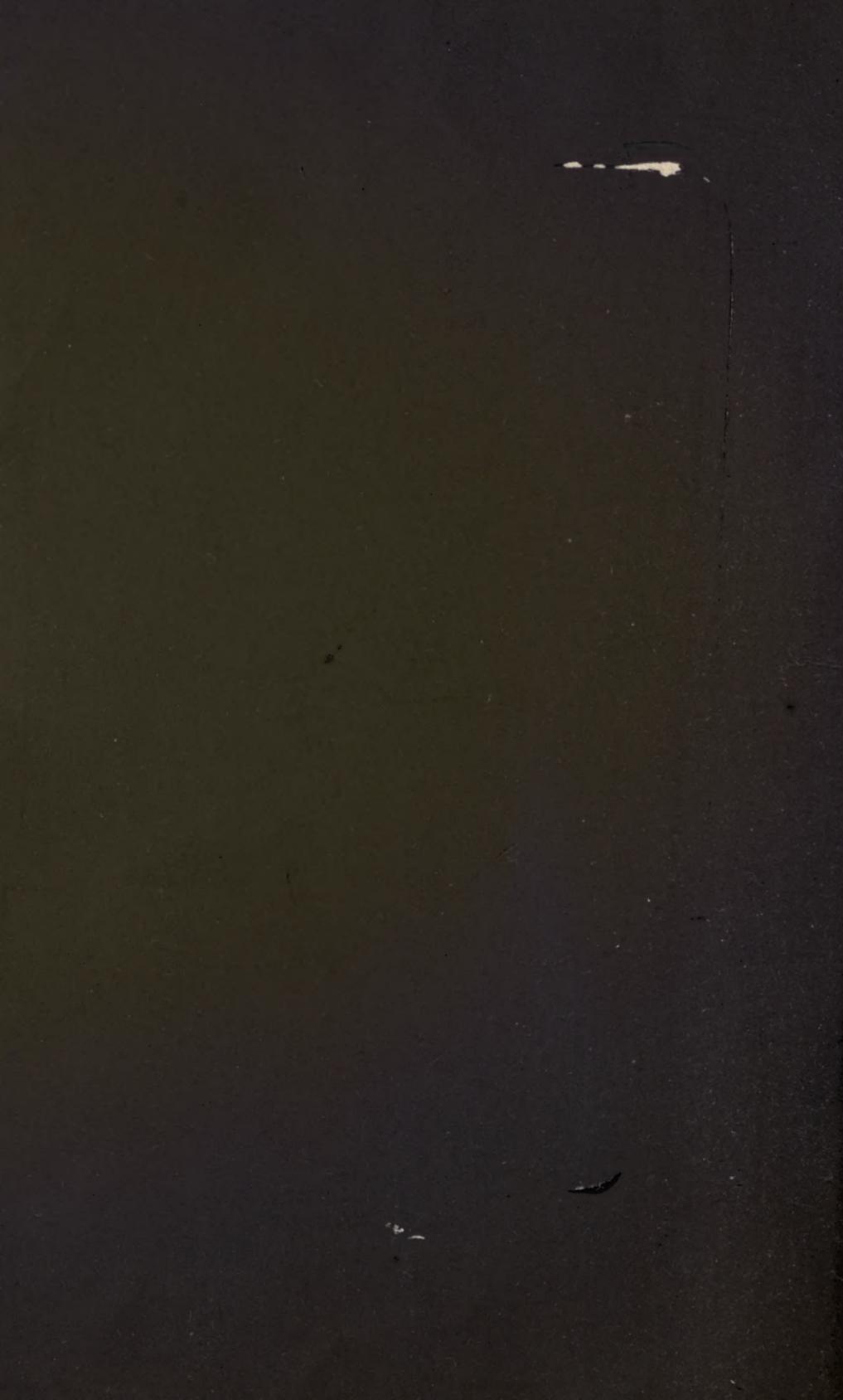
Thoughts soothing and tender came with those touching lines, and gayer images followed. Here I am in this prettiest village, in the snuggest and cosiest of all snug cabins ; a trim cottage garden, divided by a hawthorn hedge from a little field guarded by grand old trees ; a cheerful glimpse of the high-road in front, just to hint that there is such a thing as the peopled world ; and on either side the deep silent woody lanes that form the distinctive character of English scenery. Very lovely is my favourite lane, leading along a gentle declivity to the valley of the Loddon, by pastoral water meadows studded with willow pollards, past picturesque farmhouses and quaint old mills, the beautiful river glancing here and there like molten silver, until it disappears through a rustic bridge among the shades and avenues of the Duke’s park, a scene that belongs to history.

We have another historical mansion close at hand, where Lord Clarendon wrote his thrilling tale of the Great Rebellion, and where the inhabitants and the library are worthy of such a predecessor. And they are so kind to me ! and everybody is so kind ; and the new cottage is already dearer than the old.

The very gipsies have found us out. Even as I write, my little maid is bargaining for baskets with my friend of the lane, and seems likely to be as well taken in as I could be ; the pony is rolling in the meadow ; the mill-waggon, with the jolly miller’s handsome son, is looming in the distance ; and on the green before our court little Henry is driving Fan-chon, who sits perched in the wheelbarrow, whilst her brown curls are turning into gold in the wintry sun, that lends its charm and its glory to the simplest landscape and the humblest home.

THE END.





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